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## EDITORIAL

### The Growing Church

*From the fifth to the sixteenth of August 1948 a group of one hundred and thirty-five students and leaders, representing over thirty countries, came together at "Woudschoten", Zeist, Holland, to enter as deeply as they could into an understanding of the life of The Growing Church. This term was used to denote that geographical outreach and sense of mission, which constitute the truest evidence that the Church is alive in the world today. The meeting was arranged in cooperation with the International Missionary Council, and had behind it the work accomplished at Tambaram, India in 1938 and at Whitby, Canada in 1947. At the specific request of a student commission, which discussed the plans a year in advance, few addresses were given in the programme, and the maximum time was set aside for group study of the Bible and for "working groups", under senior leadership, on the key issues of the growing Church, as well as for private reading. The result was an experience which was based, not so much on the authoritative statements of experts, though a few of these are recorded here, as upon the enquiry of students into subjects with which previously they had little familiarity. Those who participated had no doubt as to the success of*

*the method, and the reader must judge for himself how far the experience has proved communicable.*

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*Apart from the specific conclusions on Bible study and the findings of the thirteen groups, which in turn are pointed up in Hans Hoekendijk's statement, we might select five discoveries which were made at the Conference. Like all discoveries in the life of the Church their importance does not rest upon any novelty but upon the fact that still another generation has made them. In that sense they are of incalculable value for the future.*

### *The Church is world-wide*

*Of course we knew that before, and an international student conference was not necessary to prove it. Besides, any Federation meeting will provide colourful personalities to enliven the panorama of the World Church. It was something much more fundamental which took place at "Woudschoten". We discovered the reality of the church which our fellow delegates represented. In periods of intercession, as well as in the sharing of facts and experiences, we learnt to think in terms, not of some conglomerate manifestation of ecumenical Christianity, but of joy and sorrow, failure and success, in the life of national and local churches.*

*As we stood one day in Utrecht amidst the wreckage, caused by nature and the hand of man, of what was once a great cathedral, and as we looked on the determined features of Willibrord, the first missionary to the Low Countries, we came to have a new sense of these living traditions, some ancient, some scarcely a century old, which were our common heritage. The Church of Christ became for us a movement of the Spirit of God from out the troubled history of the past on into the unknown history of the future. As we stood at this moment of time in the very centre of a Church which worships and preaches amidst ancient and modern civilisations, in colonial situations, independent*



*Asia and the enveloping Moslem world, we realised that we had learnt the meaning of churchmanship in the world-wide Church.*

### The Church is a minority movement

*The realisation of our churchmanship brought us not only exultation but concern. If the world-wide Church did reach from the river unto the ends of the earth, how diminished were its ranks, how thinly held its most vital positions! Our Chinese chairman reminded us that his country contained a fifth of the world's population, but after a moment we realised that all the Christians of China could only people one great modern city. We heard of the objective of the National Missionary Society of India that the Gospel should be preached in every village of that land, and it came to us as a shock that this had not yet been accomplished. We were told that there were three hundred million Moslems in the world, and of fierce opposition amongst them to the Gospel. Above us hung an outline map of the vast land mass of Europe and Asia, and, as speaker after speaker drew his hand across it to show the advance and withdrawal of the missionary movement, the great white areas of the continents became a symbol of the thinly peopled spaces of the world map of the Church.*

*And so we found ourselves realising that the world-wide Church is still a minority movement with its work of evangelisation just begun, and with mighty forces in opposition to it. From the worldly point of view this minority movement is negligible, and we might well lose heart. But from the point of view of God it is strategic, the saving remnant, the small and trusted company, which has been sent forth, and the result of whose endeavours is that Satan is beheld to fall as lightning from heaven. We found evidences of such victory in the life of the world-wide Church today.*

### The Church's strength is in weakness

*Yet after our group and plenary discussions no one could ever again feel complacent about the Church. Not*

*only are the ranks thin, but the world has invaded the Church. We could not escape by the device of blaming other people for their racial views, their colonial oppression, their selfish indifference to the needs of other peoples. The trouble was that we were these men. We realised that the Church everywhere is afraid of the consequences of its own Gospel. For example, as it meets the violent or subtle attack of marxian ideology from Korea to the Eastern Zone of Germany, it does so disarmed by its own bad conscience.*

*We found no reservoir of faith and wisdom in the Church. The so-called Christian countries did not seem to us to be the sources of light and strength. If the seed of the Gospel has fallen on stony soil in many parts of Asia, the thorns have sprung up and are in danger of choking it in Europe and America. We realised that the Church does not, and cannot, save the world. In spite of its history and its world-wide character, it is always by itself defenceless. Its reliance is upon God. "Not by might, nor by power, but my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts" remains the Church's sole and sufficient assurance.*

### The churches are drawing together

*In the light of its world-wide task, and in face of opposition from without and within, the Spirit of God is bringing unity to His Church. We were sure of that. Our own meeting was prima facie evidence. We stood in the line of Edinburgh, Jerusalem, Tambaram and Whitby. We were of those who had been at Amsterdam in 1939, and Oslo in 1947; some of us were to be Youth Delegates at the First Assembly of the World Council of Churches within the same month. We saw very clearly that our own Federation had played an outstanding part in this coming together of the churches, and we saw that we must still provide the life-blood of the ecumenical movement in the Church.*

*But we had a concern about unity. We realised that the zeal which had made the last century the great century of missionary enterprise had been the zeal of societies and sects and chosen companies. Could that sense of urgency be*



*maintained in an ecumenically-minded Church? Would men tend to forget that the unity which God gives is given for His redeeming purpose towards mankind? What if the Church, as it discovered its unity, became dumb! And so we saw that a fresh impulse of evangelism must result from our coming together, or our unity would not be in Christ. The true basis of the unity of the world-wide Church is not in cooperative arrangements, or in joint statements, or in uniformity in worship, but in the astounding fact that in cathedral and mud-hut, in every land, Christians meet to "shew the Lord's death till he come". Our unity is rooted in our apostolic task.*

There is a student missionary awakening

*There have always been movements of advance and delay in the Christian enterprise amongst students. The tide turns before you notice; and we found that it had turned.*

*A small group one day met to assess the present position of the Student Volunteer Movement. 1886 is ancient history for present-day students; sixty years is a long time for an impulse to last. We examined the situation in sixteen countries and found the term "Student Volunteer" still known and valued in a few of them, especially in the United States and Great Britain. But one could not deny the evidence that this great original stream of missionary conviction had been divided and scattered into rivulets by rocks of theological disputation, and had largely lost itself in the sands of indifference. Yet much had been accomplished. Twenty thousand men and women in the mission field has been a remarkable contribution. Still in recent years many of the leading spirits in the missionary enterprise have come out of the national student Christian movements. Let us thank God for what He has done.*

*But the future does not depend upon reviving an old enthusiasm. The remarkable thing is the number of new initiatives in relation to missionary interest which are taking place amongst students all over the world today. Many of them are outside the normal pattern of student*

*Christian movements, many of them are closely related to them. In no two countries are the forms identical. The confusion is laughable, and might be interpreted as weakness. But our conviction was that this is not so. The dry bones are beginning to live, and their method of articulating a figure of flesh and blood is not yet clear. But the Spirit of God is at work, and the Federation has the task of rebuilding a world-wide missionary fellowship.*

*The Conference on The Growing Church at "Woudschoten" is the real beginning of this task. In her History <sup>1</sup> Miss Rouse tells vividly again the story of that Mount Hermon Conference in 1886 at which eventually one hundred men gave themselves to the work of The Growing Church. There were a hundred students at "Woudschoten", men and women from a far wider range of countries, with a far deeper understanding of the meaning of the World Church. Let us pray God that theirs too may be the consecration from which a new and vaster offering of lives may spring.*

R. C. M.

<sup>1</sup> *The World's Student Christian Federation, A History of the First Thirty Years.* S.C.M. Press, Ltd., London. 12s. 6d.



# The Growth of the Church: An historical Survey<sup>1</sup>

JOHN FOSTER

Nineteen centuries of history. Five continents of space. Sixty minutes. Yet this historical background *must* be done. It is the most important kind of history, and the most neglected — the history of stages towards the fulfilment of God's central purpose.

The subject of missions may not usually be thought of like this. Even with most of the churches missions are not treated as though they were central. Church courts are responsible for the conduct of church affairs proper. Missions are the business of missionary societies — an unecclesiastical extra. This ought not to be. The preaching of the Gospel in all the world should be *central*. It is central to the New Testament. Each of the four Gospels reaches its climax in such a commission from Christ Himself (Mat. 28 : 19 ; Mark 16 : 15 ; Luke 24 : 47 ; John 20 : 21). The Acts of the Apostles sets itself to tell the beginning of the progress from Jerusalem "unto the uttermost part of the earth". The rest of the New Testament literature is letters to younger churches from missionaries connected with their foundation.

The New Testament is the beginning of the story. Church History is its continuation. And centred in both, (if we regard them according to the will of God), is the

<sup>1</sup> Acknowledgement is due to the Editor of Common Ground Ltd. for permission to use some paragraphs from material which they are publishing in one of six film-strips arranged by Dr. Foster on *The Spread of Christianity*.

spreading of the Gospel and the growth of the Church. I shall divide what I have to say into four sections and give a title to each.

*I. 29-500 A.D. — The Winning of the Roman Empire.*

Three factors helped Christianity to go on spreading quickly : Roman trade communications which stretched from Britain to China ; Greek language which could be understood by some almost everywhere except along the most easterly of these routes ; and the Jewish dispersion whose synagogues, from Spain to the frontiers of India, provided examples of ethical monotheism, not lost in a world where some of the best men were dissatisfied with less worthy religions. Especially in the early decades it was often the fringe of admirers from the synagogue which became the nucleus of the new Christian congregation. It was chiefly through St. Paul that the door had been opened to the Gentiles. Christians kept the Jewish scriptures and claimed fulfilment for all the promises concerning God's chosen people in the Christian Church.

For the first two hundred years the Christians had no church buildings. In the Roman Empire the religion had no legal standing and could not own property. It is "the church which is in the house" (Rom. 16 : 5 etc.) that spreads Christianity over the Roman world and beyond. Until the fourth century there was no leisure for the Lord's Day. That had to be kept some time between sundown on Saturday and time for work on Sunday morning. There were many after the Apostles who travelled about preaching and establishing new churches. We hear even more of lay evangelism. Slaves, wives and mothers, businessmen, travellers in the course of their ordinary duties spread the Faith. There was much opposition ; officially, because the Roman Empire feared secret associations which might take a political turn, and these belonged to a new religion which the state did not recognise ; popularly, because Christians



felt bound to separate themselves from much in heathen society, and so were thought queer. Their nightly meetings were suspected, their fellowship, worship, sacraments and discipline were misunderstood, and their warnings of coming judgment were resented. Refusing even a symbolic offering in the worship of the Emperor, Christians sometimes made it difficult for an official who wanted to be lenient. Yet nothing impressed serious thinkers more than the courage with which confessors suffered and martyrs died. In this way also Christianity spread. Opposition reached its climax in the state-organised persecutions from 250 onwards, aimed at nothing less than stamping out Christianity. But it had spread too widely and gone too deep. Failing to destroy it, the Roman state, with Constantine in 312, came to recognise it, and to seek to use its unifying strength to serve a declining Empire. There follows the period of the Imperial State Church. Christianity comes into a relation with the community which, in all the changes that follow, is never to be seriously challenged in the West until modern times. It brings vast opportunities, but problems also, the chief one being that of making real in the lives of the people their nominal conversion to Christianity. Our own period is not, as we shall see, the first instance of Christianity's gaining this position in society. It is such a happening on its greatest scale.

Outside the Roman Empire, Christianity spread eastwards. Edessa, a small city-state beyond the Euphrates, was the first to make it its state religion, c. 200. Here too the first translation of the Gospels was made, into Syriac, the language of Christianity's eastward progress. By 225 there were more than twenty bishoprics eastwards to the Caspian. Christianity seems to have reached as far as India, by land to the N. W. frontier perhaps as early as 200, by sea across the Persian Gulf to the south coast at least by 295. In the Persian Empire it faced great persecutions in the middle of the fourth and in the early fifth centuries, but survived to spread further

East across Central Asia. By 500 there were Christians among the nomads of what we call Turkestan, to whom Christianity brought agriculture, and for whom, to translate the Scriptures, the clergy made a script from Syriac.

Closer to Roman civilisation were the barbarians across the Danube. Christianity began its progress northwards among these soon after 250. Ulfilas, 341, their bishop, used Greek letters to write their language and translated the Bible — the beginning of writing for the Germanic family of languages. The later spread of the Faith among these northern nomads is the chief reason why, two centuries afterwards, when they destroyed almost everything else Roman in the West, the Church survived.

Early in the third century Christianity spread northwards to Armenia. With one of its own aristocracy as bishop, Gregory called the Illuminator, Armenia became the first country of any size to make Christianity its official religion. Christianity pressed further north into the Caucasus.

Southward, Arabia seems to have been entered before 200 and Abyssinia early in the fourth century. Soon there too the monarch was converted and Christianity made, as it has remained, the state religion.

Before we close this period, note this concerning the unfolding purposes of God. Contemporary with the vast spectacular success of the Church-in-the-world, there is another expression of Christianity developing which may be called the other-worldly way. This other movement is being prepared as the means of Christianity's survival in the dark and cloudy days and not survival only, but the means of its further spread.

In protest against the worldliness of the Church of the Roman Empire in the more peaceful and prosperous times, men began, first in Egypt, late in the third century, to flee to the desert. There they tried to keep the spirit of a sterner age. Thus developed early monasticism, later to spread both West and East. The full development



belongs to the next period when alike in the dark ages of the West and the further progress of Christianity to the Far East the monk is the mediaeval missionary.

## *II. 500-1500 A.D. — The Upbuilding of Christendom*

The period starts with the most serious reverse Christianity is ever to experience. The fall of the Roman Empire means the end of all those conditions which made for Christianity's swift spread in the West, and Islam, Christianity's greatest rival, arises in the East. Yet here all we can see is the power of Christianity's resilience.

In the midst of the dark ages Christianity survives. It is all that does survive which is Roman. Throughout Europe barbarous tongues are being spoken, tongues without a literature. In the Church Latin remains. Everywhere are barbarous men and these are lawless times. Roman law survives, in the Church Canon Law. Life has become local and most men know little beyond the immediate environment where they live. Rome remains the Church's capital. The Church survives and survives as something fundamental. Here is a point to notice in the age of ruin in which we live. If you have a message concerning the One Foundation, the best time to preach it may not be when the walls are standing and the roof is on, but when everything is a ruin and men are beginning again from the beginning. It was so with the new Europe slowly to be evolved through the dark ages, this time on a Christian foundation.

Christianity not only survived, but began to expand again, still more widely and farther north. Throughout its history there are periods of renewal in the life of the Church. The evangelisation of the world is so central that whenever there is a revival of essential Christianity such revival comes to a missionary expression. One of the most notable instances of this occurs at the beginning of the sixth century and is associated with Benedict. At a time when the Roman Empire is falling to pieces there comes this spring of new life, like all mediaeval

revivals monastic in its form, and this revived monasticism sends forth missionaries. Let us briefly note some of the achievements of these centuries.

The most northerly of the German invaders, the Franks and the Anglo-Saxons, are converted between 500-700 A.D. The expansion of the power of the Franks eastwards back towards their old German home makes possible missions up to the Rhine in the eighth century and into Saxony in the ninth. The period about the year 1000 is notable for the conversion of the rulers of Scandinavia ; to the South the winning of the Magyars of Hungary ; and of Duke Vladimir — which means Christianity's entry into Russia.

I have mentioned Frankish patronage to the missions in northern Europe. Another factor was Anglo-Saxon missionaries : Willibrord becomes apostle of the Netherlands (about 690), Boniface, apostle of Germany (a little later), Sigfried, apostle of the North. All of them are Englishmen.

These, notice, are group conversions. A community living at a tribal level has to be converted in the group. Decision is made by natural leaders and Christianity is taken up into community life and supersedes the old religion. The making good of this group conversion *for the individual* is a later task. Perhaps this is what is wrong with European Christianity — it never has been made good.

At the same time as this in the West, something was happening far away to the East, on a small scale, but startling as a reminder that ours is not a western, but a universal religion. The same year as the effective conversion of Northern England began (635), a Persian bishop arrived at the capital of China. Christianity, as a small minority religion, struggles on (so far from its base) for over two hundred years and then fades out, to survive (and spread eastwards again) among some tribes of Central Asia.

So far from fading away in the West, Christendom which is being built up soon feels itself strong enough to



face the Muslim menace. The Crusades may seem to have little connection with missions, the aim being to kill the Infidel, not to convert him. Islam (from 622) had been the first opponent to inflict defeat upon Christianity. Here at the end of the eleventh century is a crude counter-thrust from a revived Christendom. However we may criticise the Crusades, it is a beginning to have turned the turbulence of the Middle Ages towards a Christian end. It is a greater glory to have demonstrated the Christian means to that end. Save the Holy Sepulchre? Yes, indeed, but by winning those who hold it. Christianity's counter-thrust was thus refined, spiritualised, made fully Christian — which means fully missionary — by the Friars. St. Francis' crusade was to preach before the Sultan of Egypt in 1219. The two greatest Orders, the Franciscans and Dominicans, officially accepted the missionary vocation in the same year (1221). Raymond Lull was martyred in Tunis in 1315. John of Montecorvino was the first missionary from the Church of the West to reach the China Sea (1294). Opportunity for these heroic missions passed soon after 1350. They had done little to change the course of history, but much to enrich the Church's roll of fame. Here is another important instance of a revival movement, again monastic in form, coming to missionary expression.

### *III. 1500-1800 A.D. — Along New Routes*

The fifteenth century is another period of serious decline. The Church is at one of its low ebbs with regard to its spirituality. In the world outside the power of Islam has been re-invigorated by the Ottoman Turks. Yet, look how God uses an adverse situation and makes even the wrath of men to praise Him. The Turks closed Central Asia. Therefore countries of Western Europe decided to push out to discover new routes to the Indies. In 1492, in the service of Spain, Columbus sails westwards and discovers, instead of the route to India, a

new world. His task is completed by Del Cano in 1522, the first to circumnavigate the globe. From Portugal men sail to the South further and further down the African coast until, in 1497, Vasco de Gama rounds the Cape and reaches India. The Portuguese push further eastwards, and in the year 1517 Portuguese ships, the first from the West for nearly two centuries, are off the China coast. New routes are thus opened across the world. What is to be sent along them ?

I mentioned the year 1517 as seeing the completion of these new communications. That is the year when in Western Europe the Reformation begins. The Reformation is in one of its aspects a movement of revival, the revival of essential Christianity. Here, as so often, new life within the Church comes at the same time as new opportunity to carry the Church's message across the world. The tragedy of the Reformation period is that this revival movement fails to proceed to its missionary expression. The reason is twofold : Protestants in every land have to struggle so long for self-existence that they tend to settle into an attitude of self-regarding. And Protestantism is successful for the most part among the small, weak nations, not the great powers which are reaching out for world trade and empire. There is, however, a revival movement of this period which does come to missionary expression, the Counter-Reformation. Like earlier monastic revivals, this produces a new Order. Ignatius Loyola founds the Society of Jesus, those faithful soldiers of the Roman Church, ready to proceed anywhere and brave every danger in its service. They do proceed along the new routes to the world's end.

On the routes pioneered by Spain, Christianity reached the New World, and claimed the Philippines from the eastern end of the old one. With the Portuguese it reached, for the first time, Africa south of the desert ; came again to India's coasts ; for the first time to Burma, Malaya, the East Indies, Indo-China and Japan ; for the third time, and finally, to China. Among the greatest



figures in this unequalled missionary advance were Las Casas, who from 1516 did so much to redeem the exploitation of the aborigines in Spanish America, and Francis Xavier, who died outside China's closed door in 1552. Other Jesuits followed in his steps, to win an opening in China by their scholarship, most notably Matteo Ricci (1610), whose adventurous mission established a church in Peking and won converts from the highest officials in the realm and the Imperial family itself. Only one continent, Australasia, remained unentered, and that because it was unknown.

Protestants had as yet been too much involved in their own struggles for them to hear the call to evangelise the world. Some of the earliest aspirations towards such work came from the Pilgrim Fathers (1620). John Eliot, who from Cambridge followed them in 1631, was the first notable English missionary of modern times, and one of the earliest from among Protestants anywhere. He worked among Red Indians. In England the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge was founded in 1698 (250 years ago this year), and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts in 1701. These are the Church of England's oldest missionary societies. The (Presbyterian) Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge dates from 1709. All three had the needs of their own countrymen as a first concern, but all undertook some missionary work among the heathen.

The full beginning of Protestant missions awaited further revival within the body of Protestantism. It was appropriate that such revival, coming this time to a missionary expression, should begin first in Germany where the Reformation itself began. This revival is the movement known by the name "Pietism". It affected not Germany alone. Indeed from the outset Protestant missions have meant inter-action between different nations and different communions. A sign of this is to be seen in these earliest beginnings. The missionaries produced by this German revival find a field offered by the Danish colony of Tranquebar. The glory of being

the first Protestant missionary of this new movement belongs to Ziegenbalg. As happens to be the case again in our time, a royal marriage (that of Queen Anne) had brought Britain into association with Denmark. Through the Danish Lutheran Chaplain at the British Court news of this German mission in a Danish colony roused missionary enthusiasm and support in England before England had begun to produce missionaries herself. Another pioneer of Protestant missions is the Norwegian Egede who went to Greenland in 1721. Moravians about 1732 began their missions, first to the West Indies and to Greenland.

#### *IV. 1790 onwards — World-Wide*

The full flow of the modern missionary movement, however, is to come at the end of the eighteenth century. That century had seen a revival of evangelistic zeal break out at about the same time in several places. Earliest of all there is the Great Awakening in New England with Jonathan Edwards as its chief figure, and a smaller related movement in Scotland. In England the Wesleys led the Evangelical Revival from 1737 onwards, with George Whitefield going here and there and everywhere, relating English, Scottish and American revivals to one another. The new life thus generated begins to come to its missionary expression at the century's end. This movement is called *The Missionary Awakening*, and with good reason. Between the years 1790 and 1840 almost all the great missionary agencies not only of the British Isles, but of the main lands of Europe, and of North America, are founded. Contemporary with this outburst of Protestant activity comes a revival of missionary zeal within the Roman Church. This makes the period the biggest of all in missionary achievement. It is now that at last the Church becomes world-wide.

The significance of this modern missionary movement is often missed by the secular historian. The illustration of this which I have most frequently used comes from



the "Cambridge Modern History". Its fourteen volumes fill a whole shelf of my library, and volume 14 is given to the index. Since this covers the period of the missionary awakening I looked up the word "missionary" in that volume. It occurs once, "Missionary Hill, fighting at 1864", and that is all, the reference to a battle in the American Civil War! One would think that even the secular historian would have seen in this movement something unique, and a force which has begun to change the world. Something of its uniqueness can be illustrated from figures. Whereas in the first sixteen centuries of Church History we know of the Bible, or parts of the Bible being translated into thirty languages, in our time the figure has reached eleven hundred and twenty.

When one turns to achievements with regard to numbers of Christians, at first sight the results may not seem to be so impressive. In Africa, south of the desert, something like 7 % of the population is nominally Christian. In India Christianity is counted as the third religion, but, alas, how far behind Islam! Christians number some 2 %. In the rest of Asia the average is not much more than 1 %. But to say this is not enough, for Christians are influential beyond comparison with their numbers. They hold leading positions in education, medicine, and social service. Aggrey was the greatest African of his generation, Bishop Azariah one of the greatest Indians. Kagawa of Japan is not so much a national as a world figure. China counts Christians among her modern rulers. In many primitive societies Christianity has succeeded paganism as the community religion and begun to shape a new culture as it did for our mediaeval ancestors. In China fourteen universities and colleges have been established by Protestant Missions and five by Roman Catholics. One fifth of her undergraduates and one tenth of her high-school children have had a Christian education. In India educational work has gone even farther (forty Protestant university colleges), through Government

grant-in-aid, which with Indian self-government may decline. In Africa, on the other hand, while Government policy in the past has meant that 70 % of education was in Christian hands, to that are now being added large Government subsidies for medical and social services.

Medical work has been a living demonstration of the Gospel. It has also created in many lands the new and honourable professions of doctor and nurse, and set them up with Christian standards. Mission leper homes provided the largest opportunity for research which has recently led to new and hopeful treatment for the disease. Missionaries like Laubach have revolutionised the lives of millions of illiterates. From facts such as these one can see that already the modern missionary movement has changed the course of history.

But while this is so, the greatest of all results belongs not so much to world history as to Church History. This is to be seen in the last twenty or thirty years in the growth of "the mission fields" into "the Younger Churches". No longer foreign, the Christian religion has struck its roots firm into the local soil. Leadership is increasingly local, too. Sometimes the Roman Church has a more dramatic way of displaying something quite generally applicable. In May 1946 the Pope created thirty-two new cardinals. He said: "We have willed that the greatest possible number of races and peoples should be represented" (one of them, e. g., was a Chinese) "as a true reflection of the universality of the Church". Last year the World Alliance of Baptists met in Copenhagen; World Methodism at Springfield, Massachusetts; and World Lutheranism at Lund. In July of this year three hundred and twenty-nine Bishops of the Anglican Communion gathered from the four corners to Lambeth Palace, and in August the Council of Reformed and Presbyterian Churches met at Geneva. In all these you may see the same thing. National churches have become, almost in spite of themselves, *supra*-national. On the other hand denominations, which rebelled against the State connection and set out as "gathered churches",



gathered out of the world, find themselves now with a startling position *in* the world. All of them are, just as much as the Roman, "a true reflection of the universality of the Church".

And it is chiefly out of the cooperation forced upon us by doing the missionary task that the Ecumenical Movement has grown, the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910 marking the beginning of that ever-increasing volume of mutual consultation between Christians in the affairs of the Kingdom. On August 22nd at Amsterdam the crowning event in this movement takes place. There will be constituted the World Council of Churches, representing every main tradition in Christendom except the Roman Catholic. Some of us believe that this may be the crown, not of one movement only, but of all this age-long progress in the growth of the Church.

There remains one thing to be considered, the effect of all this upon us. One of the most crying needs of our day is that we who belong to the various churches should come to realise what it means to be a member of the world-wide Church. Something of this we shall be considering throughout our Conference. But one thing I want to suggest at the outset, the fact of there being a world-wide Church should mean that the total resources of that world-wide Church are available anywhere in the world according to the call of need. If it were so, you see what it would mean with regard to resources of money and buildings, of learning and skills ; with regard to those other riches, unseen, but just as real, the prayers of the Saints ; and, most important of all, with regard to the gift of lives.

# **The Condition and Task of the Church in Africa**

CHRISTIAN K. DOVLO

The Church in Africa, like all other churches, is part and parcel of the Universal Church of Christ. She therefore inherits all the fundamental beliefs and teachings of the Catholic Church, as well as her successes and failures, her theological controversies and conflicts, her internal and external evil forces and her struggles against all forms of materialism and other powers of darkness of this age of ours. But her condition and task are, perhaps, heavier and more formidable than those of any other Church because she is still very young and inadequately provided with leaders capable of shouldering all her burdens. She has not the same long history of centuries of Christian experience behind her ; nor has her arena of warfare in any sense anything Christian about it. In many countries in Europe or America, there may be forces at work in secular life which may tend to be detrimental to Christian progress ; but the whole social organisation, in spite of everything else, is so fully charged with Christian influence that the Church at least works in a sphere which was made definitely Christian by the past generation. In Africa, on the other hand, the Church struggles in an environment which is entirely pagan and ignorant of Christian truth. It is the breaking of altogether new ground and the carrying of a torch into complete darkness. The torch must be kept burning continuously, because once the light is out the whole place will automatically become dark again. Yet we know that when the Church in Africa succeeds in



surrendering herself completely to Christ, the present danger will be over because He, the Light of the World, will become her perpetual light and guide.

It is in this sense of our difficulties and handicaps that I like the title "The Younger Churches". We are young, because we have all the failures, the temptations, the disappointments and weaknesses of infancy and youth. But we have also all the energy, the vitality, the hopes and the joys of youth. Like children we also can hear Jesus saying to you the older Churches, "Suffer the little ones to come unto me for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven". We are no longer foreign missions, but younger brothers and sisters who need all the experience and leadership of their parents, or older brothers and sisters, to support them in all their struggles for existence. This, therefore, is our present relationship, since the whole world to-day is a wide mission field needing every method of evangelism, whether in Britain or Russia, America or Japan, China or Africa. Ours is a world evangelism for Christ in this age.

But what is the peculiar condition of the Church in Africa to-day ?

### *Disabling conditions*

There is, first of all, the physical and material condition which differs very much from conditions in other countries. There are tribal divisions which separate the different tribes, not only geographically, but also linguistically. There are too many small groups with their own distinct languages and customs that must greatly puzzle a new-comer to the continent. Then there is the great poverty of the people with a very low standard of living in many areas, which can scarcely enable any Church in Africa today to stand on her own feet. Tropical diseases of all sorts are still common, and physical health is in danger everywhere. Perhaps Africa has the most limited medical attention today. The number of practising doctors in Edinburgh alone is more than all

the doctors in the whole of the Gold Coast. One may ask : "How can people under such physical disabilities serve God effectively ?"

But it is not the physical condition of the people alone that affects the Church. There are also spiritual and moral issues at work. Heathen worship throughout the ages has one fundamental theological factor, namely, that the worshipper worships in order that he may gain something of material benefit from the god he serves. The gods are blind arbitrary forces who ruthlessly punish the evil-doer or cause natural disasters or reward the worshipper who correctly performs the ceremonies. Hence in the early history of missions we often hear of fetish-priests turning the whole population, which had been very friendly before, against the missionary by impressing on them that the lack of rainfall, for instance, was due to the anger of the gods because the people have accepted the new god Jesus Christ. This religious background is still there today so that the African pastor has more to do with the back-slider, who becomes disappointed and returns to the fetish-man for help, than with the pure pagan who is to be converted. Physical diseases, the death of relatives and friends, failure in business, lack of children in marriage, and fear of unknown spiritual forces are always tossing the African Christian between Christ and the "juju-man". This makes evangelism difficult because the unconverted heathen, seeing the so-called Christian seeking help and protection from fetish-priests, wonders if it is worthwhile to be Christian at all.

### *The greatest miracles*

But in spite of all this some of the staunchest of the fetish-priests have been converted, and in many areas to-day the back-slider is rather a mockery to the heathen than a hindrance. In many towns and villages we have today some of the greatest miracles in the history of the Christian Church with regard to conversion and complete self-surrender to Christ. It is the surest sign that



Jesus shall reign wherever the sun shines in spite of all the obstacles and disabilities. The failure is not on the part of God and the heathen or the nominal Christian, but on the part of us who receive the commandment "Go ye into the world and preach to all creatures, baptising them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost ; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world". It is we who must guide, support and build them up.

### *The confusion of denominationalism*

So what is our task today ? Our first task is internal. We must try to break down the danger of denominationism within the Church. The denominational differences in the West have no meaning whatsoever for the simple African. He is entirely confused when he sees three or four different denominations fighting to set up a Church or school in his small village of about five hundred. I remember a story of a young African girl whose parents died as Presbyterians. Later a Roman Catholic priest came along and told her that everyone who had been baptised by her Church would go to hell. The girl asked him about her parents and she was told that they would surely be in hell too. She therefore decided to remain a heathen so that she would go to hell to see her parents and not to enjoy the bliss of heaven while her parents were suffering agony in hell ! In fact, denominations in Africa today confuse rather than help the course of evangelism.

### *The power of heathenism*

Secondly, there is the task of facing new forms of heathen worship. The fetish-priest in African society is not as foolish and barbarous as many pictures of them tend to show. He is the cleverest member of the primitive society, and he knows that his livelihood depends upon his practice. So today when he finds that Christianity with its decent way of worship and unique moral

laws has come to stay, he tries to adopt the Christian way. He formulates rules and observances along the same pattern and tells his followers that his fetish is exactly the same as Christianity except that he, in addition, can give them special medicine which will keep them safe from the evil eye, or give them a child in their marriage. This new stratagem makes many of them very rich today and they give freely for school buildings and other social welfare services to convince the people of their sincerity. How are we going to face a situation like this ?

### *Christian hypocrisy*

Thirdly, there is the task of evangelising the best educated members of African society today. These educated people, especially those who come overseas for university degrees, come into contact with all kinds of evil forces at work in our present material civilisation. They have the same education as any other so-called civilised people, but they are still denied their rights and are dangerously snubbed because of the mere colour of their skin. They find among Europeans worse vices than they knew in their own country. Thus they return home worse Christians than before, and to them Christianity is the greatest hypocrisy anyone can practise. They see rather in communism that universal brotherhood which Christianity preaches, but scarcely ever practises. Their greatest danger is their influence on the simple African at home. He naturally looks upon this well-educated brother as a leader, and takes his word as the gospel. If the Church in Africa can win these leaders of thought, their influence in evangelism will be one of the greatest weapons in her hands. It is, therefore, one of the most important tasks of the Church today to evangelise and to use this most talented and best educated element of our society. At present most of them have no religion. They can no longer worship the old gods, nor bow before the Moslem mosque with the uneducated host. Such a state of vacuum is dangerous



for any society especially as the vacuum is amongst the leaders of the society.

*The giant awakes*

In conclusion I would like to say this : Africa is often described as a sleeping giant. This is true, and the giant has been sleeping all these centuries. But today the giant is awaking from his long sleep. He is not fully awake as yet, and in his half-sleepy state he is throwing his hands about to catch something to support himself. Around him are so many things : communism with its iron curtain, material civilisation with its attractions, blind nationalism with its hatred of all other races, the wounds and bitterness of colour prejudice practised against all coloured races the world over, as well as Christianity. Which of these things will the giant finally take hold of ? The whole future, not only of Africa, but also of the world depends on this. It will greatly affect our age for good or for ill. Those of us who see that only in Christianity lies salvation, not only for Africa but for the whole world, pray that the giant may take a very firm hold of Christianity. As a true African, I want to assure you we are no longer content to remain as hewers of wood and drawers of water for the other races. We want to cast away everything that has hindered us in the past. We are now a determined virile race, desiring to contribute our full and unique share to the good of humanity. So we want you to treat us as such because, if conditions continue in the world as they are at present, we shall all pay for it. Christianity for Africa today or never ! This is our challenge.

## Controlling Ideas of China<sup>1</sup>

Y. Y. TSU

You have asked me to speak about the Church in China today. I must resist the temptation to tell you stories of the war years when I was acting as chaplain for both the British and American armies on the Burma Road! You can talk with me personally about these experiences of wartime life in China. On the other hand, I do not wish to give you anything like a statistical report. Reports of that kind are apt to be static. I should like to try and present to you the situation of the Church in China in a more dynamic form.

How is the Christian Church winning China for Christ? What is it doing, how far is it going, what handicaps does it meet with? First of all we must say something about the realm of ideas. You cannot preach the Gospel effectively without understanding the ideas which are abroad in the minds of men. Look for example at Robert Morrison, the first Protestant missionary to China, who went there in 1807. He was forbidden to preach the Gospel, but he spent seven years in mastering the language of China and the thinking of the Chinese people. He composed the first Chinese-English dictionary and in 1813 he published the first edition of the Chinese New Testament. Morrison, you see, set out to try to understand the controlling ideas in Chinese life. Let me for illustration put three of these ideas before you.

<sup>1</sup> This article is based on notes of a speech given at the Conference.

*Controlling ideas*

## 1. HSIAO

This Chinese word denotes filial piety, family loyalty and responsibility. Anyone who visits China observes at once that this is one of the basic ideas of Chinese life. The Chinese character itself denotes the relationship of elder to younger. From one point of view you can see the older person looking after the child, and from another point of view you can see the child bearing the burden of the older person. This factor has been a stabilizing influence in the life of China. For example, marriage in China is not just a question of romantic individualism, but is determined by family responsibility. You may feel this is strange from your Western point of view, but one good result is that this attitude to marriage is a deterrent from easy divorce. In the heat of emotion it is a stabilizing influence.

## 2. TAO

This is a very difficult word to translate. In common use it means *the way*, yet it is a much deeper word. You can think of it as denoting universal movement, like that of the stars, or the cycles of the seasons, or the glacial periods in the world's history. It calls up a picture of a vast procession of universal movements. You may equate it, if you like, with fate and predestination. A rather simple illustration would be that of a man catching a train. You can get to your destination if you jump on the train, but if you jump on the wrong train you do not get to it. The real test therefore is getting on to the right train and so utilising a movement which is already taking place in order to reach your goal. So the word may also mean eternal reason in action. How has this influenced Christianity?

There is a Bible illustration from the first chapter of the Gospel according to St. John. You remember how it begins: "In the beginning was the Word..." The Greek word is *logos*. It is not easy to find the right term



to use. When the first missionaries translated the Bible, they took the word *tao* from Taoist literature. Thus, "In the beginning was the Tao, and the Tao was with God..." It had, they felt, the right kind of philosophical connotation. Thus a rich Chinese concept has made a contribution to Christian thinking.

### 3. ZEN

One translation for this term is "humanism", or human fellow-feeling. It is the doctrine of humanity and it comes from the teaching of Confucianism. In the Chinese character for this term, the whole of human life is summed up in the duty of man to man, as man. The character denotes two men. The essence of Chinese ethics is humanistic. That is its level.

Now you see I have given you three basic controlling ideas in Chinese life. If you understand them you understand the basis of Chinese life. But now today you must notice two other controlling ideas which have begun to take their place in Chinese thinking.

### 4. SCIENCE

Science is all the rage now in China. Everything is scientific. You can even see on a street in a Chinese city a notice indicating that a man is a scientific barber! Thus science has become one of the dominant ideas in China, as in so many other countries. Our great contemporary philosopher, Hu Shih, once took part in a debate among China's thinkers on the relative importance of science and philosophy in life, and he summed up his evaluation with this sentence: "With my head and my two hands, I can do all things". That is the modern creed in China, with science all things are possible. Some of us today are finding that it is a mistake.

### 5. COMMUNISM

Here is a second new idea which has recently been introduced into the pattern of Chinese life. It is making a heavy inroad into Chinese thinking. As Christians,

we have to face this. Along with the other ideas I have mentioned it has become part of our Chinese environment. I do not have time to develop it here, but no doubt you will be discussing it in this Conference.

### *Christian tasks*

Now you may ask, "What are the specific Christian ideas which we wish to introduce into the Chinese way of life?" Or, to put it differently, how are we trying to do Christian work in this environment, or atmosphere? I have time only to mention two or three factors in our approach.

#### 1. LITERATURE

One of our most important tasks in China is the production of Christian literature. Chinese people value a book enormously. Even though they are not able to read, they still value a book. Indeed it has a certain magical quality. There is a fundamental respect for the written page. But, alas, our production of Christian literature has been very weak. It is only recently that the various Christian boards and other bodies have been trying to strengthen it.

Above all things we need popular Chinese Christian writers. We have some brilliant Christian writers already, like Y.T. Wu, who is editor-in-chief of the publications of the YMCA. He has written some outstanding books, for example, a recent one which is entitled: *No Man has seen God*. Then there is Prof. T.C. Chao of Yenching University, Peiping, who has written many books, including poetry and hymns. Recently, he published a new *Life of Christ*, and a *Life of Paul*. I might mention also John Wu, who is now Chinese Minister to the Vatican. He began by being a Methodist and then became a Roman Catholic. He has translated the Psalms into Chinese in a fine literary fashion. He has taken this ancient Hebrew poetry and has put it into Chinese poetry, so that it can be read and enjoyed by anyone who appreciates good

Chinese literature, whether Christian or non-Christian. Now he is translating the New Testament in the same way. He is very gifted in using Chinese allusions for Hebrew allusions which are strange to the Chinese mind. Surely we ought to take a lesson from this and seek to bring literary talent into the Christian Church. In that way we might well reach people who, otherwise, would not likely be reached.

## 2. THE MINISTRY

I must say that in finding and training men for the Christian ministry in China we have not been doing very good work. Professor Foster here can tell you about one of our outstanding theological seminaries in China, where he was a professor. I understand that there are only about three hundred and fifty students studying theology today in China. Out of that a number are women students and others preparing for various forms of Christian work outside the ministry. I believe therefore that less than two hundred men are being trained definitely for the Christian ministry. There seems to be no movement yet in China which would draw men into the ministry comparable, for example, to the Student Volunteer Movement in relation to missionary work. This is a very urgent need. We must have far more well-selected men for the Christian ministry.

Let me illustrate this still further from my own Church. Before the war, in 1937, there were two hundred and seventy-five ordained Chinese clergymen. In 1947 there were still two hundred and seventy-five. Ten years have passed by without our doing any more than make replacements. Consider for a moment what that means. There is a ten year lag. When we studied the age groups we found that 95 % were forty years of age and over. Some of you may have read that delightful book *Life Begins At Forty*. But the Church's ministry must not begin at forty! We must have more young men for the Christian ministry in China. It is essential to the life of the Church.



I might point out that there is an even worse situation as regards missionary forces from outside China. In 1937 in my own Church there were eighty ordained missionaries, and in 1947 there were thirty. That was a drop of more than 50 %. I would like to emphasise this point in your discussion of the call for missionaries.

### 3. WORSHIP

I can only say a few words about the whole field of worship. I am sure the situation in China is very similar to the situation in other countries. If you could attend a Confucian ceremony and then consider the state of Christian worship in China, you would discover that we have been very negligent in this matter of Christian worship. You will find Christians worshipping in a hall designed with a platform on the arrangement of a playhouse with little to induce you to worship. Too many Christian churches in China have been designed simply for preaching. The Roman Catholic Church has a great asset in some of its buildings and furnishings. When you go there you find yourself drawn to worship. I believe this is a very important question. We are not made up of 95 % intellectual factors and 5 % the rest. Indeed one might say that for 80 % of our make-up we are attracted by worship. I should like to suggest that worship is the concentrating of our whole personality upon the person of Jesus Christ.

You will see therefore that there is great need for people to study, emphasise and propagate good standards of worship in China. We need work on liturgy and on hymnology. One good thing is that six denominations in China, after five years' work, have produced a common hymnal. One fifth of the hymns are Chinese hymns. The title of the book is a good one, *Hymns of Universal Praise*. That is going to help us greatly, but much more has still to be done.

I have no time to deal with other subjects, such as Christian education in relation to the whole Christian task in China, or the Christian Church and a communist

regime. Just a closing remark : Chinese life is undergoing great change. It is not merely political or economic, but essentially social and spiritual. For the young Christian Church, it is a time of severe testing, but also one of great opportunity to proclaim the Gospel of Christ and to bring Christian principles to bear upon the new national life that is emerging.

## The Church in the Moslem World

W. MONTGOMERY WATT

I remember one summer morning in Jerusalem, just as it was growing light, lying awake and listening to the muezzin calling the faithful to prayer. In what he says there occur the phrases, "God is great, come to prayer, prayer is better than sleep". This is a symbol of how in the ancient centre of the Christian faith another religion is now dominant, a religion with a message that appeals to the hearts of men, a religion proclaiming truths that we Christians cannot and dare not deny.

### *The religion of Islam*

What then is this religion of Islam ? About the year 600 of our era Mohammed started to call the Arabs of Mecca to believe in God and the Day of Judgment. He met with opposition and, after some years, in 622, he and his followers fled to Medina. In the remaining ten years of his life practically all Arabia acknowledged him as its sovereign. After his death Syria, Egypt and Iraq were rapidly overrun and within a century the Arab Empire stretched through North Africa to the Pyrenees in the West and to the Oxus and the Punjab in the East.

Most of the inhabitants of this empire became Moslems and have remained so, so that there are about three hundred million Moslems in the world.

The central ideas of Mohammed's message are shared with Judaism and Christianity. People often discuss the difference between the Moslem conception of God, and revelation and the Christian conception, but in my opinion the essential difference is that Islam has definitely turned away from Christ. We cannot say that Islam has definitely rejected Christ because it seems possible that, owing to the defects of the Christian Church in the time of Mohammed, the Gospel of Christ was never presented to him in a form that he could appreciate. But what apparently has happened, whether in the case of Mohammed himself or of later Moslems, is that Islam came to realise that there was something in Christianity which was at variance with its own doctrines. Instead of seeking to learn where the truth was, Islam considered that it had complete knowledge of God, and did not require to learn any more, and so it has turned away from the Christian revelation and built up a system of theology which has, as it were, sealed off the Moslem World hermetically from Christian truth. Our special subject this morning is the Church in this Moslem World.

### *The Church in the Moslem World*

For a time I had the privilege of ministering to the Christian congregation in Hebron. Hebron lies among the Judean hills, round about the sepulchre of Abraham in the cave of Machpelah. On one of the hills there is the new police station looking like a mediaeval castle, except that it is built of reinforced concrete. Opposite it stands the Christian hospital at present closed. In the hospital chapel there used to gather most of the Christians of Hebron, a small band of about fifty among an unfriendly Moslem population of 25,000. The congregation was probably the most heterogeneous in the



world for it included Maronites, a Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, an Armenian Orthodox, an Armenian Evangelical, an Arab Anglican, a Danish Lutheran, a Scottish Presbyterian, some Baptists, Congregationalists and Methodists from the British Police, one of the Plymouth Brethren and two Arabs attached to the American Gospel Alliance. To these I, an Anglican priest, ministered. This is of course not a typical congregation of the Church in the Moslem World, for most congregations are practically homogeneous. Yet, in a way, this congregation is typical of the Church in the Moslem World. It benefits, or at least benefitted, from the protection of the Western powers; it is surrounded by a hostile mass and it is greatly divided within itself.

The following table is intended to show the number of Arabic-speaking Christians in Syria and Egypt respectively, Syria being taken to include Palestine, Lebanon and Transjordan. There are very few Arabic-speaking Christians elsewhere in the Arabic East. It should be noted that the figures refer only to Arabic-speaking Christians and that even the old Syrian Church which is included is not completely Arabic-speaking. The figures refer to the situation before 1939 and are in some cases highly conjectural, yet the general picture they give may be taken as accurate.

### *Statistics of Arabic-speaking Christians*

**SYRIA** (Total population : 5,000,000)

<i>Acknowledging the Pope</i>		<i>Others</i>	
Maronites . . . . .	225,000	Orth. - Patr. of Antioch . . . .	150,000
Greek Caths. . . . .	150,000	- Jerusalem . .	50,000
Syrian Caths. . . . .	60,000	Old Syrians . . . .	100,000
Latins (Rom. Caths.)	25,000	Anglicans (Palest.)	4,000
Chaldeans . . . . .	30,000	Presbyterians . . . .	? 4,000
		(Leb. and Syria)	
		Other Protestants .	? 2,000
	<u>490,000</u>		<u>310,000</u>

*EGYPT (Total population : 16,000,000)*

<i>Acknowledging the Pope</i>		<i>Others</i>	
Coptic Caths. . . . .	35,000	Copts . . . . .	1,000,000
Greek Caths.. . . .	17,000	Orthodox. . . . .	? 28,000
Latins and other		Evangelical . . . . .	52,000
Uniates . . . . .	7,000	(Presbyterians)	
		Others * . . . . .	13,000
	<hr/> 59,000		<hr/> 1,093,000

\* Chiefly Plymouth Brethren, Canadian Holiness Church, Apostolic Church of God.

In his opening address Dr. Foster emphasised that the fact of the world-wide Church means that the riches of the world-wide Church should be available wherever in the world-wide Church there is the call of need. It seemed to me, as I listened to him, that perhaps the greatest need was here in the Church in the Moslem World. Here above all there is the need for partnership, that conception which was stressed so much at Whitby, and it is round the conception of partnership that I want to build the rest of what I have to say.

*Partnership in the ancient churches*

It will be clear from the above table that in the Arabic East we are dealing not merely with older churches and younger churches, but also with ancient churches. And the first thing to be said about these ancient churches is that they deserve our whole-hearted respect. Dr. Foster showed us in his graph how, despite some periods of regression, the Christian Church has been expanding, especially in recent centuries. But while the Christian Church as a whole has been expanding, there has been, since the year 750, a steady decline in the ancient churches. For 1300 years they have been fighting a rear-guard battle. For 1300 years they have been enduring persecution. It may seldom have been fierce and bitter persecution, yet they have always stood under disadvantages and been inferior to the ruling class

of Moslems. For the magnificent stand which they made and the way in which they remained loyal to their church throughout these centuries we owe them the deepest respect. At the same time we must realise that they are especially liable to a certain temptation, the temptation to be proud of their achievements in the same way as the man who kept his one talent safely hid in a napkin. Instead of showing respect to these ancient churches, however, the majority of Western missionaries thought that these oriental Christians were little better than idolaters, and they set about converting them, as well as converting Moslems. Indeed most of the so-called converts who have formed the younger churches in the Arabic East have been taken from these ancient churches. Of the membership of the Anglican Church in Palestine, for example, probably not 1 % are Moslem converts, and something the same is true of the other younger churches.

Several Western missionary societies have now completely reversed this policy and seek to convert only Moslems, but others are still ready to make converts wherever they can find them. This strategy of carving Western churches out of the ancient churches has been, I believe, thoroughly disastrous. With the possible exception of the Egyptian Evangelical Church, none of the younger churches is strong enough to stand by itself, whereas the ancient churches have been seriously weakened by the removal of some of their best members. Observers more competent than myself are of the opinion that within twenty years, perhaps within ten years, most of the non-Roman Christians of Syria, apart from the Orthodox of the Patriarchate of Antioch and the Old Syrians, will have become attached to the Greek Catholic Church where there is strong and vigorous leadership exercised by Arabs. It would seem that it is too late to recover from this strategical mistake in Syria. The door is already shut.

What then is the alternative ? What is involved in partnership with the ancient churches ? Two illustrations



may be given of how a different strategy has been successfully employed. In 1816 a bishop of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church applied to the Church of England for help in the training of theological students. This was given, and although many difficulties arose subsequently and the course of partnership was far from being smooth, yet we have now a church faithful to its ancient traditions and yet abreast of modern theology and full of missionary zeal.

The other instance is more recent. Among the ancient churches of the Arabic East there is the Armenian Orthodox, or Gregorian Church, not mentioned in the above table because its members speak Armenian and not Arabic. About 1923 Canon Bridgeman of the Protestant Episcopal Church of America went to Jerusalem to try to help the ancient churches. He was able to offer his services to the Armenians to help with the training of their theological candidates in whatever way they desired. At first they only asked him to help to teach English. But, as they came to trust him, they were ready to give him much more responsible work including the teaching of Church History, a very delicate subject in the Middle East, and instruction in Western theology. The generation that was influenced by Canon Bridgeman during his twenty years' stay in Jerusalem is now growing up and attaining some of the senior positions in the Armenian Church, so that this Church is rapidly coming into the full stream of Western thought while adhering loyally to its ancient forms of worship.

This shows what can be achieved by working in partnership with the ancient churches. It must be added, however, that there are very serious difficulties which prevent the application of this method to some of the other ancient churches. For example, the Arab village priests of the Orthodox Church in Palestine receive about £3/— per month, whereas a domestic servant is paid about £10/— per month. No educated man can bring up a family on such a salary and therefore there are no educated clergy to take advantage of such

help as a Western theologian could give. Indeed there is practically nothing in the way of training for the Arab village priests in Palestine.

*Partnership in thinking.*

What has been already said implies that there must also be partnership in thinking, both in theological thinking and in strategic thinking. Theological questions are involved in adopting an attitude towards the ancient churches and it was mistaken theology that led to the mistaken strategy of early Western missionaries towards the ancient churches. Again theological questions are involved in our attitude towards Islam. It is important, for example, to answer the question, "Do the Moslems worship God?" Personally I am convinced that to say that Moslems worship not God but Allah is bad theology. It suggests that what we worship is a conception and not a real thing. For instance, a man who is about to marry a woman has a certain conception of her. After five years, or twenty-five years, of marriage his conception of her will be very different. He will realise that the conception he had before marriage was a very inadequate one. But, although the conception he then had was inadequate, he truly married the woman because what he married was the woman and not his conception of her. In the same way the fact that the Moslems have an inadequate conception of God does not imply that they do not worship God. We must also remember that the word Allah is simply the Arabic word for God and was used by Christian Arabs before Mohammed and still is used by them.

Partnership in thinking must also be partnership with Christian Arabs, for Christian Arabs are included in the world-wide Church. For example, it is easy for the Westerner to say that Mohammed is an impostor, but it is difficult, if not impossible, for the Christian Arab to say that, because Mohammed is his great national hero, the founder of the Arab Empire. Many young

Christian Arabs, in view of their Arabic nationalism, are today perplexed by this and similar problems. Therefore their point of view must always be taken account of in Christian thinking on such matters. We in the West must try to appreciate all that is sound and of value in Mohammed and in Islam. If Christianity is really to take root in the Arabic East it must be Christianity expressed in forms congenial to the Arab mentality and that will require a full appreciation of all the achievements of Moslem theology.

### *Partnership in the use of resources*

"The fact of the world-wide Church means that the resources of the world-wide Church should be available wherever in the world-wide Church there is the call of need". This is not the place at which to discuss fully the question of partnership in the use of resources. I should merely like to throw out one suggestion as an example of the sort of partnership which is becoming possible. It may be that a Syrian Christian from India could do more than a Westerner to help the ancient churches of the Arabic East, such as the Coptic Church, to a fuller appreciation of their own liturgies and an awareness of the outlook of Western theology. And if the Syrian Church found this difficult financially it might be that the Western Churches could help in that respect.

### *Partnership in the Holy Spirit*

Finally there is that aspect of partnership which is partnership, or fellowship, in the Holy Spirit. In a paper on the Holy Spirit in fellowship given at Whitby, Prof. Levonian called attention to the work of the Holy Spirit in convicting of sin. If we feel that the ancient churches have sinned in being proud of keeping their talent safe in a napkin, yet have we not also, or at least some of us, shown similar pride in our stand for certain principles regardless of the interests of the Church as a



whole? If Islam has sinned in being proud because it thinks it knows all about God and therefore has nothing to learn from Christians, yet have we sufficient humility to be ready to learn from Islam? Here I would like to give my testimony that I have learned a great deal from my study of Islamic theology, not perhaps by accepting the statements of Moslem theologians as they stand, but in that my reading of these writers has brought to my attention aspects of Christian truth that I had overlooked, or neglected.

The situation as I have presented it is one of desperate urgency. From the human point of view it is full of problems to which no solution can be seen, it is hopeless, it is impossible. But what is impossible with man is possible with God. It is good to remember this in other cases where we feel the urgency of situation, as for example in the problems raised by communism. It is so easy to feel that we must rush in and do something at once. Perhaps the message of the Church in the Moslem World to the rest of Christendom is that such hasty action is not likely to lead to any satisfactory results. The problem can only be solved by waiting on the divine action and offering ourselves so that the Holy Spirit may work through us.

In presenting the needs of the Moslem World, I have not been making any definite appeal for men and women to go there as missionaries. But I have been trying to make you conscious of the needs of the Church in the Arabic East. The situation there is one which calls for Christian workers both with first-rate intellectual qualifications and also with great strength of character based on Christian faith and coupled with Christian fortitude and Christian humility. God, in His own time, will call men and women to work for the conversion of Islam. Our part is to offer ourselves to Him, so that He may make us worthy instruments ready to serve Him, just as He will, and when and where.

# Does God call us ?

## I

### An Englishman answers the Question

A. DENIS BALY

I must confess that I find it extremely difficult to talk on the sense of vocation because I am only a very ordinary person, and exciting things do not seem to happen to me. However, I feel that it is a subject of the first importance because at any rate in the West the modern student seems very largely to have lost all sense of what vocation really is. This is partly due to a feeling that he is no longer free to choose his own way of life for himself. In many countries the state is more and more being forced by circumstances to take control of the life of its citizens, and people are being directed into certain activities which are felt to be for the good of the state. Even in those countries where there is still far greater freedom of choice there is always the fear, the haunting fear of war which appears to be so imminent that it seems at times almost pointless to try and plan our lives at all. Nevertheless, I am convinced that it is of the first importance that we should try to regain our sense of what vocation really means.

*God is wise*

I think we shall have to go back to the beginning and start to think it out all over again, and I am proposing here merely to give you a few pointers towards what

I think to be the right direction that our thought should take. I suggest that we start with Isaiah. You will remember that one of the great key ideas running through the first thirty-nine chapters of the Book of Isaiah is the idea that God is essentially reasonable, that He is wise, that He is, if you like, intelligent and that everything which He does makes sense. You will remember that some of the people in Judea at that time prided themselves upon their political intelligence in making a treaty with Egypt. But Isaiah poured scorn upon them. "God is wise", he said, and again in another place, "This also cometh of the Lord who is excellent in wisdom" — the Hebrew word is very difficult to translate, but it means that kind of wisdom which is most likely to succeed. Nevertheless, Isaiah had a very strong sense of the calling of God and he felt that he himself had been called in a most spectacular manner.

I must confess that when I was listening to D.T. Niles the other day I had a strong sympathy with the members of the Conference who said, "He puts things very clearly, but I cannot understand him". He spoke with such emphasis about God calling and saying, "I want you", and yet I cannot think of any moment in my life when God has said that to me. If that is vocation, then I have never been called.

### *How God may call*

Nevertheless, I am perfectly convinced at the back of my own mind that I have in fact been called and that the work which I am doing is the work which God has called me to do. It seems to me that although there may be some blessed people for whom the calling of God comes clearly and dramatically, yet for many of us it is a different and even a more gradual process. Sometimes I believe it is very difficult to be certain that God has called us, and God's calling may come in very unexpected ways, so that we do not immediately see that it is God who is calling us.



If I may give you a piece of my own experience, and after all it is only from my own experience that I can speak, I first became a missionary somewhat unwillingly and certainly I was very far from sure that this was to be my life work. I received a little printed notice from a scholastic agency telling me about a job in Transjordan, which I did not particularly want to take. However, I felt it would be somewhat cowardly of me not at least to offer myself. I did so and was accepted, but I went out with every intention of returning after three years. It was only when I saw the great need of continuity in the Middle Eastern schools that I decided to remain. Now, looking back, I am sure that God called me at that time and that I am now doing the work that He has called me to do.

I say all this because a great many people are troubled about the nature of Christian calling and they wish to be made certain that it is God who speaks to them. I must put my conviction into words that for many — indeed I think for most people — Christian vocation takes the form of a conviction that certain things are true and that there is a great need that this truth must somehow be made known. I believe it to be true also that God may have often called you very much against your will. It seems to have been true of Moses, of Jeremiah and of Hosea, none of them really wanted to live the life that God called them to live. Two of them certainly felt that they were quite unqualified to do it, and here I think it is necessary to emphasise that our own opinion of ourselves has very little to do with it. It may be that we see something which needs doing and apparently nobody is doing it. If we do not, then it will not be done. Calling may be no more than that.

*Does God call specifically ?*

Now from this I think we ought to turn to the question of whether God calls us to do certain kinds of work. I think it will be admitted that in the first place we

are called to be Christian, to live the Christian life and, if necessary, to put our Christian faith into words. But does it go farther than that? I believe that most people would admit that there were a calling to the ministry of the Church and most people, I think, would go so far as to say that nobody should become a priest, or minister, unless he feels that in some sense he has been called to this task. Some people would go on to say that there is a calling also to be a doctor, a teacher, or a nurse, and that many people are in these professions because they felt called to them. Yet, few people would insist that nobody must become a doctor, or a teacher unless he has been called. And then what about such people as bakers, engineers, chemists, bridge builders, cooks and that extraordinarily useful man who came and mended our water supply for us? Is there a calling to go and do that work? Few people today think that there is, and yet God also is wise. He has put us into a world which somehow makes sense. He has put us into a world in which we have to live in society. We have need of bakers, and of chemists, and we all of us know very well indeed how greatly we need the man who mends our water supply. Therefore I believe it to be true that God has need of such people and that it is time that we considered again the whole question of vocation in relation to such tasks.

*Is there a call to go abroad?*

From this I should like to turn to the question of whether there is a vocation to go and work abroad. God also is wise and He has made of one blood all the nations of the world to dwell upon the face of the earth. It is to be presumed that He did not expect them to live in isolation. There must be a to and fro movement between them. It surely must be that some people will come out of one nation to work with the people of another. If this is true of the world, how much more must it be true of the Church. There is one Church and we are constantly

being made more conscious of its oneness. Therefore, I think it to be true that, although for most people it is probably God's will that they should bear Him witness in the countries in which they have been born, yet there must be a minority whom He is calling to leave their own country and work elsewhere. Now it follows from this that if you are amongst that minority whom God is calling to work in another country, then it will be a sin for you to remain in your own. Students still have a considerable part of choice about how and where they are going to live their lives. Therefore I think that all students should have their minds constantly open to the possibility that it may be God's will for them that they should go to another country. I say "constantly" because I do not think it is sufficient to make up your mind once and for all what is God's will for you. Your mind should be constantly open to the calling of the Holy Spirit Who, as I say, may act in very unexpected ways. Only then will you see His calling, if it comes to you through such unexpected channels as the type-written slip of a scholastic agency.

*The call to be a Christian abroad.*

The last point that I want to make is that the work of the Church of God is not confined to those people who are working in the paid employment of the Church. A great many people in the West leave their own countries and go elsewhere to work as government officials, or in the great commercial companies. These people are looked upon as Christians by the non-Christian population and therefore in the very moment of a man's decision to be a geologist in a great oil company in Irak, in that very moment God calls him to be a missionary. I do not mean by that that he is expected to go out and preach the Gospel in so many words. After all he is being paid a possibly exorbitant salary to do something quite different. However I do mean that he is called upon to live an obviously Christian life, to be



regular in his attendance of Church, and in such things as that which may be extremely difficult in the circumstances in which he lives. If he does not, however, he will be letting the Church down. I hope very much that the Working Group on the Congregation may give some consideration to what is the responsibility of the local congregation towards such lonely Christians who, in their simple way, can do so much to strengthen the reputation of the Church in the eyes of other people. I know that everybody does not agree with me, but I think that such people ought to be encouraged to become full members of their Student Volunteer Movements at home because they are no less bearing witness to Christ in a foreign country.

## II

### A Chinese answers the Question

K. H. TING

#### *Is there a missionary call ?*

Yes, to every Christian. It is most natural for Christians to want to tell others of Christ. My friend Chuan Wen is a typical example. How surprisingly quickly after his conversion he began to go about, not only selling insurance policies which was his occupation, but trying to convert people to his new convictions and new life. To be sure, he committed many blunders. We felt it was dangerously quick. We doubted whether he was not doing more harm than good to himself, to others and to the Church. Perhaps, from the standpoint of "common sense", our worry and doubt and fear were all warranted. But his new life in Christ simply defied all human common sense. It was we who had to learn anew to relax ourselves, and to give a greater allowance to the

movement of the Spirit which escapes our inclination to "patternise" things.

Converts like Chuan Wen may be said to be naturally missionary, right from the moment the seed of the Gospel takes root in their hearts. We do not need to make them "missionary-minded" by invoking all the clever devices of missionary education to convince them that they have got something worth passing on to others. You rather think of the words of Christ: "If these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out".

If this is true of individual converts, this is also true of the "younger churches" as churches. The one thing they discover for themselves very quickly is that evangelism is the life-blood of the Church. It is only in reaching the Gospel out into the world that the Church can keep it vital for itself. Nothing can really kill the Church until the Church is induced to forget its missionary task.

Let us not be too sure that we have any right to say that we and our Church are "too weak" to be missionary. Let us rather say that we and our Church are not missionary enough to be strong. Indeed, I do not see why God needs to give us strength, even though we say we want it in our prayers, unless it is used by us to proclaim the Lordship of Christ to the millions and millions of people around us who have not yet heard it proclaimed.

The truth actually amounts to this: If Christ has become anything to you, He must be everything to you. And if He indeed is everything to you, how anxious you must be that He should be made to mean everything to all people everywhere. That anxiety in you corresponds in a small way to the eternal hunger in the heart of God Himself, His eternal longing for the whole of mankind to return to Him. The missionary vocation is thus not anything about which we have to be argumentative, as if the force of our arguments were necessary to prop it up. God being what He is, the conquest of the world with His love can have no alternative. If

happily we realise this and let ourselves be used in this, ours is really the most glorious vocation — the nearest humanly possible vocation to that of the Incarnation itself, as it is through this vocation that something of God is made knowable to men in terms of their contemporary, everyday, flesh-and-blood realities.

*Is Christ wanted by India, China and Africa ?*

First of all, let us realise that no matter whether India, China and Africa want Christ or not, Christ wants India, China and Africa. The seats for these nations must not be vacant when peoples shall come from the east and the west, from the south and the north, to take their places in the feast of the Kingdom.

As to India, China and Africa themselves, as well as all other countries, they both want Christ and do not want Him. They in their sensitivity cannot easily want Him because He is uncomfortably challenging and demanding. But they, also in their sensitivity, know that it is Christ and nothing less that they need in order to obtain the grace of God and the deliverance from sin to the full status and liberty of the children of God. Thus to Christ human beings offer violent resistance just as they also give themselves up in utter humility and gratitude. To Christ, we not only say, "Depart from me, for I am a sinner", we are also driven back to confess, "Lord, thou hast the words of eternal life ; to whom shall we go ?"

But why do we need to be so concerned with the question of whether Christ is wanted by men ? Do we have any right to expect men to want Him ? Should we not rather assume that He will have to be unwanted and rejected by men ? For, if otherwise, where lies the hardship, the challenge and, indeed, the necessity of missionary work ? We are like the man who asked Christ, "Are they few that are saved ?" and He might answer, "What is that to thee ? Follow thou me."

Whenever the Church is not quite confident of her own belief, she starts to look eagerly for external factors



to justify her existence. If people do not seem to "want Christ", then we think that the principles of gentlemanliness and tolerance should forbid us to "impose" our religion upon others. But tolerance is sometimes very doubtful as a Christian virtue, and is a very convenient cover-up for spiritual exhaustion. Everybody seems happy but issues are blurred. When a man is drowning the help called for is not so much your tolerance of his ideas but a life-belt which you know to be a life-belt.

*Are missionaries wanted ?*

It is unmistakable that missionaries are wanted by the younger churches. They are needed for many reasons and these reasons will mostly hold good even when the younger churches have grown much stronger. They bring to us the experiences and heritages of the older and stronger churches ; they link us up with the Church Universal and through them we get a glimpse of the reality and the richness of the whole Body of Christ ; they bring to us tried methods and techniques that can be made useful in our lands ; by their life and deeds and by their being what they are, they can gain access to many sorts of people who otherwise can hardly be reached ; as fellow-students in Christ, they learn and teach and train the youth so that, before too long, we can be ready to tackle the big untackled areas ; they watch and are inspired by how non-Christians come to accept Christ for the first time, and how the New Testament has its tremendous impact on the life and mind of the new converts and their communities. This, in all its simplicity and straightforwardness, should be very enriching to the total spiritual heritage of the World Church, if the missionary can interpret it aright. And, last but not the least, missionaries are so important to their mother churches as live-wires keeping the missionary torch burning and, thus, their church life vigorous.

Part of the reason for Christians in the West to ask whether the younger churches still want missionaries is

the amount of romantic discussion about the "wonders" of the younger churches and about how western missionaries are to work "under native leadership". This discussion has helped Christians in the West to see once again that their job is to let the Church grow and achieve maturity and not permanently to keep mission stations going. It has also reminded Christians of the East of our own responsibilities. But I wish that it had not created abroad the notion that the younger churches are really mature enough today to dispense with western personnel help. Such idealisation of the younger churches is harmful and may undermine much of the missionary interest which would otherwise become manifest.

### *What about priorities ?*

It is obvious that all countries can only have the equal claim. China does not need Christ any more badly than the United States or India (or any less badly). But the line of demarcation today is not national. We Christians are looking at the entire non-Christian world as the area to be won for Christ. There a total strategy is called for. We need to spread out our resources more evenly.

Then, missionary work among other peoples enables us to gain a fuller understanding of the Gospel itself. It is only in evangelizing that you really start to evangelize yourself. In the Gospel as it is in Christ there is such a deep, unplumbed and hidden treasure that it cannot be fully explored by anything less than the whole human race. We shall not know the eminence of the Gospel, and our worship is bound to be incomplete, until it comes to include all for whom it was meant. It will take the whole humanity to embody the Christ that is yet to be and to bring to full expression the unsearchable riches of Christ. We might very well remind ourselves that the New Testament, which is so essential to our faith, has come to be written only as a result of the missionary work of the Apostolic Church.

Then, think of the oppression and injustice that has been done and is still being done by the big powers to the peoples of the countries which are today at the receiving end of missions. In great humility and penitence, Christians must go at least partially to undo the wrong that has been done. Other forces from your countries are there to give a negative testimony to Christianity and it is up to the Christian forces to give the positive testimony to counteract it.

*How much do I have to sacrifice ?*

For every pleasure you have to give up something. Here the missionary merely shares the common situation of all human beings. We, Christians of the East, have much to thank the missionaries for, but between you and God it is perilous for you to think of your task in terms of sacrifice.

We are hesitant to greet a missionary who is obsessed with the idea of self-sacrifice. He reminds us of Jonah. Poor Jonah survived not only his three days in the stomach of a whale, but also the centuries since then and is still occasionally incarnating himself in his more refined form in the duty-bound, unhappy and self-pitying missionary !

An unwilling missionary like Jonah can also do some good, but can cause a lot of trouble. He works out of a sense of duty. His response to the call of God is merely intellectualistic and is not a response of the whole person. He has no joy and no deep love and he cannot hide that fact very long. By virtue of his sacrifice he feels that he ought to be ministered unto rather than to minister, and he almost feels that his sacrifice puts him in a good bargaining position with God. He forgets that a Christian's vocation is really the highest fulfilment of himself as God sees him. He is finding life and not losing it. There needs be no passive, unwilling obedience or the crushing of our own will. We should make a living, willing, joyful and grateful offering of ourselves and of our will to God.



The most powerful illustration of this humility and willingness in taking up a God-given vocation I can think of is that of St. Mary, as the Angel of God broke to her God's call to the unexpected task of giving birth to the Christ. It was a task of glory, to be sure, but it was also one of unthinkable humiliation. The whole mankind now owes her eternal gratitude for her ready consent to become instrumental to the most tremendous event in human history, the event of the Incarnation of God and the Redemption of man. May we ponder anew the joy, the gratitude and the eager cooperativeness in her simple answer : "Behold, the handmaid of the Lord ; be it unto me according to thy word".

### *Who is qualified ?*

Our Christian vocation is so glorious that nobody is worthy of it. But, at the same time it is so glorious that your worthiness and your unworthiness do not count at all.

Perhaps as a result of much discussion as to what a missionary should be like and what he should not be like, some missionaries have been led to take themselves too seriously. They become self-conscious, tense and stiff, instead of just being themselves, natural and at ease.

We must take our vocation seriously so that God may use us. Yet, in another sense, we need not take it seriously so as to leave enough room for the Holy Spirit to operate in us. What we do is extremely important because it is God's work. Yet, at the same time, what we do is also extremely unimportant exactly because of the same reason. Just as a physician of the body only establishes certain conditions in the patient and in his environment under which God, who is the God of health and wholesomeness, restores the physical well-being in the patient, so a missionary merely establishes certain conditions under which the Holy Spirit can work to restore the health in the souls of men. I am quite prepared to question whether much of the fruit of the missionary

work has not been reaped in spite of the missionaries rather than through them. Even Jonah, the unwilling missionary, could be instrumental in bringing about repentance on the part of the people of Nineveh, but we feel sorry for Jonah himself.

It is very important for missionaries and all Christians to realise their own unimportance, as it is only by realising our own unimportance that our importance can be viewed in its true perspective. And this perspective can probably help the missionary to strike the happy balance between his seriousness and his relaxation about his job.

And do not let us forget the life-transforming power of the vocation. The power which works through us works also in us and, in spite of our unworthiness, transforms our own lives and makes new men of us in ways as significant as the transformation of the lives of the people to whom we are sent. We are called not because we are good, but because we have heard the Gospel. And as we respond to that one-sided call of God, He upholds us and makes us into His fellow-workers.

# The Growing Church in the Bible

## I

Four Bible Studies prepared by THÉO PREISS

### 1.

*God's hand is stretched out over the nations*

(Is. 91. — Read also Is. 14 : 24-27)

Here are the lines of God's strategy. The people of God are wedged between the two blocs, Assyria and Egypt. Each is aiming at perpetual dominance over the world.

1. The prophet announces that the hand of God will smite them both and free the subject peoples. God has already smitten Babylon, He will smite Assyria. His hand is stretched out over all the nations (Is. 14 : 26).

God smites Egypt. The heart of the Egyptians melts within them ; civil war arises, in despair they call on the dead, then comes tyranny, the country is in confusion, its economy ruined by unemployment. The elite and the experts turn, distraught, to the basest superstitions (v. 3). The country reels like a drunken man. Events pass beyond men. It is God who stretches out His hand to judge and to smite.

What about the crisis of our civilisation ?

2. In the midst of this chaos appear five colonies of the people of God (parish = *paroikia*, a colony of foreigners in a country).

I Peter 2 : 10 ; the people of God who have obtained mercy, witnesses of the light. Our citizenship is in heaven, Phil. 3 : 20.

What is the vocation of the people of God among the nations ? To adore, to be a sign and a witness to God (v. 20) : God smites and heals.

What should our message be to proud and distracted nations ?

3. International order, the unity of the world shall come. Men shall go to and fro from West to East, in both directions.



The road between hostile nations, those cruel nations which tyrannised over Israel, passes through the holy land where the Cross was once raised. Israel will be a blessing in the midst of the world. Gen. 22 : 18.

How are we to be a blessing ?

How far has this been realised yet ?

4. v. 24-25 : What have we learnt about the place of the nations in the new humanity which is united in Christ ?

God stretches out His hand — to smite, to heal, to bless.

## 2.

*A greater than Jonah is here*

(Jonah 1, 3, 4)

This is a short novel which reminds a self-absorbed Church of its prophetic vocation.

1. What happens to the witnesses who tried to get away ? God reigns. He can use storms to serve His will (Mark 4 : 37 ; Acts 27 : 21). If the world is to be saved, judgment must begin with the house of God (1 : 12). Jonah is one raised from the dead. In what sense must the people of God pass through death and a new creation ? (Mat. 12 : 38 ; Luke 11 : 29-33). The only sign given to Israel is the Cross.

2. Jonah obeys. Repentance may lead to repentance, as self-justification leads to self-justification. Even God "repents".

3. Why is Jonah angry ? *His* prophecy, *his* religion are proved wrong, and God alone reigns.

Jonah (the Church ?) escapes once more. What action does God take to show him that the Church cannot be saved alone without the world ? Isn't the Church always vacillating between a smug sort of tranquillity and despair ? What happens to the Word of God when we try to put it into cold storage ?

(Ex. 16 : 20 ; I Cor. 9 : 23... "That I might be partaker thereof with you").

4. God has compassion on the proud city (4 : 2 ; Mat. 25 : 31-46). What is so grotesque in our groaning over our misfortunes ? The people of God can only live if they go into the world ; the Church can only live by being missionary.

5. Is the expansion going to be gradual and harmonious, or a struggle, through the tempests of history, under the sign of the cross ?

## 3.

*Jesus sends forth His missionaries*

(Mat. 10 : 5-33)

Jesus has just shown the signs of the Kingdom of God which comes in Him ; He has triumphed over disease and death, over demons and over sin (Mat. 8-9). It is the time of the good news ; the twelve are to announce it to Israel. Jesus gives them all His authority (Mat. 7 : 29), and it has power.

1. Why does Jesus forbid them to go among the heathen ? (Read Mat. 15 : 21-26). What is God's strategy ? Concentration upon Israel in order to create a missionary people in which all nations will be blessed (Gen. 22 : 18).

In what sense was Jesus a universalist ?

After this concentration on "the remnant of Israel", on the Son of Man in the crucified Jesus, it is the breaking out, the command of the Risen Lord to extend the people of God to the ends of the earth. (Mat. 28 : 18 ; John 12 : 20-32).

2. Why this poverty ? Is it asceticism, or a testimony that the ambassadors have no strength and no assurance save in God alone ? What is the danger of human aids ? (The prestige of the white man, etc.)

3. Why can the missionary today not use this rapid method ordered by Jesus among the Jews ?

4. What is the significance as regards missionary policy of the conflict between the sovereignty of Christ and that of the powers of this world ? (The tension between Church and State).

5. What do we learn from vv. 19 and 20 about an apologetic of adaptation ?

6. vv. 21-22. Is the Gospel just like petrol which runs the motor of some particular class or national culture ? Did Jesus proclaim a continuous progress or does the *Word* always lead to division and judgment ?

7. What is the motive here of flight ?

8. The fear of the Lord removes the fear of the world. The body of the Church lives under the Cross by the life of its Head.

9. The Gospel is to be proclaimed everywhere (v. 26). Read Mat. 24 : 4-14 and I Cor. 9 : 16. What is the ultimate guarantee of the evangelisation of the world ? Is it not the intercession of the Son (Rom. 8 : 24 ; I John 2 : 1) ?

4.

*"The Love of Christ constraineth us"*

II Cor. 5 : 11-21

(Read also 4 : 7-18 and 6 : 3-10)

God alone is to be feared : "Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel" (I Cor. 9 : 16). As in Mat. 10 it only matters that God should justify us. Before the world, the witnesses do not seek to establish their reputation. They are only witnesses, not advocates.

1. What is the meaning of "the love of Christ constraineth us" ?

- a) it embraces the whole of humanity,
- b) it drives us forward.

Christ died for us all. Hence every man is seen "in Christ", through Him. By this mysterious exchange (5 : 21) the condition of the world before God has been radically altered. All belong to the second Adam. In him the new creation has been realised. But mankind does not know that they have all been naturalised as citizens of the Kingdom and Sons of God. We can no longer know Christ through the flesh, as a mere individual. He is involved in, identified with, the least of wretched men. Read Mat. 25 : 31-46. In the most degenerate of men Christ waits for us and would be loved and served.

2. Why this passive verse 20 "be ye reconciled to God" ? Where does the Gospel differ from an ideal to be realised ?

3. What are the consequences of this new situation, this new creation in the life of the Church ? In its attitude to differences of race, of class, of nationality ?... Both within the Church and without.



4. What are the function and authority of the ambassador of Christ? How is he to be at the same time under the orders of the King and present in the world? How far is the Gospel to be adapted to the world? (I Cor. 9: 20-23.)

5. What is this ministry (*diaconia*)? To serve God, or to serve men?

6. What is the secret of reconciliation between nations and peace in the world? (Read Eph. 2: 11-22.) Where must our strategy be different from other human strategy?

## II

A Summary of the Results of Study prepared by D.T. NILES

### 1.

#### *The Church in its relationship to the world of nations*

God is God of the nations and the Church finds itself in a world where God is busy with the nations, where nations are discovering their own emptiness and their helplessness before God.

The Church finds itself scattered among the nations and where the Church raises its altar to the Lord and calls upon Him, it becomes a witness to the reality of God's intervention.

This witness many in the nations too will then accept, until a highway is built between the people of God in every nation.

Then will the dividing line be a line, not between Assyria and Egypt, but between the people of God and those who are not.

What the Church therefore does in the world of nations is to create a new front.

### 2.

#### *The Church in its relationship to God and God's ways*

God is sovereign mercy but that does not relieve the Church from the responsibility of proclaiming God's Word to all peoples. We cannot say, as Jonah did: Nineveh is God's concern.

Jonah refused to preach judgment because he knew that God was merciful. When we preach only the mercy of God, we lull people into a false security and so make God's judgment operative. It is when we proclaim God's Word as involving judgment that people are exposed to God's mercy.

Jonah preached judgment as a vindication of God, but God's concern is not with vindicating Himself but with saving men. The Church must preach judgment with the prayer that judgment may not arrive but that the people will repent.

It is not possible to proclaim judgment and then escape judgment oneself. The Church cannot pitch its tent outside the city.

What God demands of us is obedience, but God remains free to use that obedience as He will. God is not tied by the theology of those who obey.

### 3.

#### *The Church in its relationship to its task with all its implications*

The task of the Church is to preach the Gospel and to be the means by which the powers of the new age become operative.

This task is urgent today because we are living in one of the days of the Son of Man. Doors are closing which we must enter now. Judgment is on the horizon and the remnant must be gathered now before judgment takes place.

This task must be fulfilled in the strength of weakness.

Conflict is inevitable, but the scandal and the foolishness must be the scandal and the foolishness of the Gospel only.

### 4.

#### *The Church in its relationship to its own life as the New Humanity*

The Church is the New Creation. In it God's love operates, through it God's love flows.

The whole world is His. He has redeemed it and therefore the world must be reconciled to its true Lord. We are stating the Lord's claim to the New Creation.

The Church must share the sin of the world, and so become the agent of reconciliation.

# **An International Workshop<sup>1</sup>**

*The members of the Conference were divided into thirteen working groups, which held seven meetings of an hour and a half's duration. In addition a library was provided and several periods were set aside for private reading. Brief reports were presented in plenary session containing some of the salient conclusions, or points in the discussion. These reports are now recorded, not only because they contain material of considerable interest, but far more because they indicate how valuable an experience of this kind can be for a student group which is prepared to give time and study to such questions.*

## **1.**

### **The Strategy of the Church**

#### **a) *The Church, its nature and task***

We began by discussing the characteristic marks of the Church and decided to record them as follows :

1. The preaching of the Word of God as revealed in Jesus Christ, and the administration of the Sacraments.
2. Obedience to God alone.
3. A unity of fellowship within the Church itself.
4. An expression of courageous witness and abounding life.

We soon discovered, however, when we began to discuss the precise nature of the Church itself, that there were certain differences of opinion within the group upon this subject. On the one hand there were those who believed that the Church on earth

<sup>1</sup> This is the place to record the gratitude of the whole Conference to Denis Baly, who drafted the final outlines for discussion on the basis of material sent in from many sources.

is the visible institution which functions as the Body of Christ in the world, and that it is this institution of fallible human material of which the New Testament speaks and which Christ does indwell and empower. On the other hand, however, were those, who in view of the frequent failure of the historic Church to display those marks which we have already enumerated, hesitated to associate too closely what the New Testament has to say about the Body of Christ with any visible institution in this present world.

We feel that this difference of outlook upon the nature of the Church is one of the most important discoveries of our group and one to which investigation must be given, and attention paid, for it affects most vitally our considerations concerning the strategy of the Church.

The group affirms that history is not moving in cycles but is going forward to a culminating point. Whether this end of history, as we know it, is to be achieved by a process of gradual conversion until the Reign of God is acknowledged throughout the whole world, or whether it is to be by a dramatic intervention of which we know neither the day nor the hour, it is the duty of the Church to proclaim God's saving grace in creation and redemption to all mankind.

#### b) *The Church and the world*

The strategy by which this proclamation is achieved will have to vary from place to place and from time to time, and no specific rules can be laid down. We do, however, feel that the extensive method of proclaiming the Gospel over a wide area must always be followed by an intensive method whereby central points are established from which the territory already covered can be consolidated.

The Church is faced in every land with a position in which it is in the minority and we feel convinced that its most effective method of presenting the Gospel is by means of consolidated attacks such as the five year plan in China or the Kingdom of God movement in Japan. This type of consolidated attack brings the Church together in the aggressive action which should be a permanent feature of the Christian community. We feel a deep conviction here of the great need for lay evangelism and a deep



faith in the converting power of the Christian life as lived within the community.

There are several comments which we should like to make with regard to the methods of approach employed by the Church. Whilst the essential message of the Christian Gospel is eternally the same, we must seek always the best means of presenting it to varying national, social and religious groups.

We would emphasise also that the saving word of Christ is a total one, in that it has achieved the redemption of man both soul and body. The preaching of the Gospel must therefore be accompanied by those other activities which minister to the total need of man, such as medical and educational work. When we speak we must speak to the whole man with a full recognition of both his spiritual and physical needs. This is in itself a continuance of the sacramental principle of the spiritual speaking through the material, which is expressed in the Incarnation.

If the work of the Church is to be well consolidated then there must be, as soon as practicable, an indigenous ministry and leadership. In order that this may be achieved it is vital that educational work should include a theological school in which this training may be carried out. It has however been pointed out in the group, and we feel it is worth while to report the fact, that we should not labour under a fetish about the question of indigenous leadership, believing that it is valuable merely because it is indigenous. The governing factor in selecting leaders for the Church in any area should be the answer to the question "Who is the best man for the job?" The Church is fighting an uphill battle and the leaders in this conflict must be the men who have the best qualifications for the work whether they be indigenous or otherwise.

In view of the minority position of the Church, and the dangers from secular forces which confront it, we were obliged in considering strategy to consider the relationship of the Church and the State. The problem of the Church and State is no new one and we have only to turn to the New Testament to find that this tension existed from the very beginning, for in both the Gospels and the Epistles we find comments upon the duty of the Christian in relation to civil government and the persecution of the Church by the civil power.

One section of the group affirmed that the Church and the State must always remain in complete separation, whilst the other maintained that some degree of collaboration is possible, as is seen in those countries which have an established Church. The whole group, however, is convinced that the Church must always maintain a position of independence in which it can, when necessary, criticise the action of the state and maintain the right of individuals to justice and liberty of conscience. The supreme value of each individual personality is based upon the Christian doctrine of man and it is the sacred duty of the Church, whether in East or West, to guard this.

c) *The Church and unity*

Finally we recognise that the great factor which impairs all our strategy is the sin of our disunity. We are convinced that each denomination is only proclaiming a part of the truth revealed in Christ and that there is a vital need that all should come together into one unity of belief and organisation, for so long as the visible Church is disunited it cannot with full power speak the reconciling word of God. We believe therefore that through faith and *repentance* the unity of the Church must be brought to a more worthy visible expression.

2.

## **The Teaching of the Church**

It was our task to discuss the essential message that the Church has to proclaim. We obviously could not cover the whole field of Christian doctrine, but it became a growing conviction, as the discussions developed, that we should try to find the relation between different aspects of the teaching of the Church, understand their dynamic content, and ask ourselves what is their relevance for modern man.

In doing this we experienced not only the difficulty of communication common to every ecumenical discussion, and the pains of our divisions, but also we experienced far more deeply the fundamental unity and fellowship within the World Church.

There are four points that we should like to make :

a) *The Apostolic message*, we found, was both in a Jewish and pagan environment a recital of events. In an impressive monotony the original witness of the growing Church was an account of the divine deeds of God in history which reached their fulfilment in the coming of our Lord (Acts 2 : 22-38). In him "God visited his people". It is our conviction that this points to two facts :

1. God is not the fulfilment of human ideals ; that is, "basic Christianity" is not a set of ideas. We cannot isolate Christian conceptions from this total action of God, or set any one act apart from the total series of God's mighty acts. He has taken the initiative and made himself known, and makes himself known in his creative and redemptive activity.
2. History is the realm of God's action, the field where he brings about changes in the real world. The teaching of the imminent end is of extreme relevance to our life now. It gives every moment a decisive quality ; every hour is the time "to wake out of sleep, for now salvation is nearer to us than when we first believed". Therefore, history is also an opportunity for repentance and change.

According to the Apostolic message Christ's death and resurrection was the turning point of history. The old world has already passed away. It has been conquered and overcome. In faith we have already embarked upon the new age, the final revelation of which is always imminent. Tomorrow is here.

So then, the teaching of the Church centres round the Incarnation, Crucifixion, and Resurrection of our Lord. It is this decisive act which must be our starting point in our attempt to discover the fulness of Christian truth in all its implications.

b) *The fulfilment of history in Christ* is, and has to remain, a mystery. We cannot explain it in terms fully acceptable to human reason. God assumed human flesh. The Lord of history willed to enter into time "under Pontius Pilate". The final answer to objections against this scandalous act can only be that "not flesh and blood, but the Father in heaven can reveal" that the

man Jesus of Nazareth is more than a prophet, namely God Incarnate. (Mat. 16 : 17.)

c) *In Christ*, who was the "image of the invisible God" (Gal. 1 : 15) we know what man is meant to be. The man Jesus of Nazareth is a judgment on all humanity and at the same time the only hope for mankind.

Some of us felt that the Christian doctrine of man has to be elaborated from this doctrine of Christ. In the manhood of Jesus the meaning of our humanity is revealed. "Behold the Man". As Father of Jesus Christ God is Father of mankind. (Eph. 3 : 14-15.)

Others, however, were convinced that the Christian doctrine of man should originate from the conception of creation — that man was made in the image of God. This image of God in man should not be interpreted in terms of qualities in man, but as a relationship which even the Fall could not totally corrupt and in which man is set in the love of God and under the law of God.

It is urgent — and we think that in this field still much has to be done — that the Christian doctrine of man should be fully formulated and put into terms relevant to modern man. All traditional conceptions (e.g. "personality", "body, soul, spirit") seem to be inadequate to express the relationship and nature of man as taught by the Church. They fail to be a concrete judgment on the dehumanisation in modern society, and to give a convincing pattern for restoration of the dignity of man, for whom Christ died, and who was created by the Father of Jesus Christ.

d) *The work of God in Christ* is made effective for man by the Holy Spirit, God amongst us. He makes "newly-present" the redemption in Christ by revealing what flesh and blood cannot reveal, and by overcoming unbelief.

Since Pentecost the Spirit has dwelt in the Church, making it the means whereby God in Christ continues to work amongst men. Where the Spirit indwells, guides, and builds up, there is the Church. The teaching of the Church can only be safeguarded from mere rationalism when moment by moment the Holy Spirit fills our thoughts and words.

The work of the Holy Spirit is not, however, confined within the Church. He is working at all times and in all places,



preparing the hearts of men to receive the Gospel. By his twofold activity, within the Church and within the world, men are brought to the knowledge of God in Christ and incorporated into the Body of his growing Church.

### 3.

#### **Christianity and other Religions**

Because of the limited time available we were only able to study three of the main forms of religion. These were : Animism, representing primitive tribal religions ; Hinduism, which has been described as the highest form which polytheism has ever taken ; and Islam, the dominant form of monotheism in vast areas of the world today.

##### *a) Animism*

In our discussion on Animism we concluded that some of the greatest obstacles to the acceptance of Christianity were : fear of the unknown ; the group solidarity of the people with their ancestral worship which retains unbroken customs and traditions ; and the tribal concept of religion which identifies Christianity with western civilization and therefore cannot distinguish between real and nominal Christians among western peoples.

However, it was not decided that, even with a people so backward in religious forms, the Old Testament should take the place of the Gospel as a preparatory stage. The Old Testament can only be used in the light of the Gospel ; but it does provide a helpful illustration of God's dealing with a people as a whole. The individualistic approach of Christianity which is accepted by the majority of missions does not take into account the fact that tribal religions are group religions and must be approached as such. The comprehensive approach, taking all matters affecting the community as a whole into account, is very important.

##### *b) Hinduism*

The question of the relation of the revelation in Christ and a supposed general religious knowledge of natural man cannot be answered in general terms, regarding the religion of Hinduism,

for Hinduism is a social order within which *all* forms of cult and experience, — atheism, polytheism, monotheism, magic, etc. — can find hospitable reception. Therefore the most apt way to answer this question is to state the point where for a Hindu, lies the irrevocable decision for Christ. It is quite possible for a Hindu to adore Christ as his God and Saviour without ceasing to remain a Hindu. The decision falls at the moment that he decides to witness to Christ to his fellow men as the way and the truth. To put it more simply : the criterion is not that he accepts Christ, but that he accepts Christ *and rejects Hinduism*. The scandal in India is baptism, for which a man irrevocably breaks the ties with his Hindu religion. The Gospel is the Church.

Because of this infinite hospitality of Hinduism the preacher of the Gospel cannot help presenting the message as a scandal ; therefore, it is impossible to speak about Hinduism in any form as a schoolmaster to bring men to Christ.

How far may the Christian try to build on the non-Christian's experience and culture, and how far must the non-Christian go through an experience of complete annihilation ? This question is extremely important because of the need of indigenization of Christianity in India. The Christian Church has to clarify the fact that it has not come to destroy the best achievements of Indian culture, but to save them and to give them their due content and value.

To a certain extent we can compare empirical Christianity and Hinduism. Many Christians in Europe and America are virtually Hindus because they personally accept Christ, but do not feel the need to witness to him. Therefore one can state that the revelation in Christ is not only the crisis of Hinduism, but also of empirical Christianity.

When the question of the relation between the revelation in Christ and some forms of Hinduism, as for example the Bhakti religion, would be discussed in the way it is discussed here, the whole discussion would get a new and very clear light.

### c) *Islam*

The group discussed the question whether there was any element of revelation in Islam. Some maintained that there was such an element, in view of the fact that Mohammed repeated

conceptions derived from the Old and New Testaments, e. g. in calling upon men to believe in God. A second party held that, only if the Holy Spirit working in Mohammed enabled him to appreciate the truth of God's existence, so that he did not apprehend this truth in a merely intellectual fashion — only in that case could it be said that there was any element of revelation in his belief. It therefore remained to decide whether the Holy Spirit could be said to work in Mohammed in this way. A third section held that there could be no revelation without personal experience of Jesus Christ. There could, therefore, be no true knowledge of God apart from Jesus Christ. Those who held that Mohammed had some true knowledge of God felt that this third section based their assertions on a view of the nature of truth derived, probably unconsciously, from Hegelian philosophy.

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The relation between the Christian Gospel and the other religions as a whole was discussed at considerable length at Tambaram, but even at the end of that Conference Dr. Kraemer had to say "The amount of agreement and mutual understanding *in regard to this problem* reached in Tambaram, has been so appallingly small that we in the first place stand in need of patient endeavour to understand and probe each other's pre-suppositions and starting points". In the light of this statement, we can see the difficulties with which we were faced, and we can understand more clearly why we in turn reached only a small amount of agreement and mutual understanding.

#### 4.

### The Church and Secular Forces

We dealt with the subject under four main headings. After discussing secularism in general, we went on to a more specific discussion — that is a discussion of scientific humanism, nationalism and communism.

### a) *Secularism*

We defined "secularism" as "living as though God did not exist". It is not the same as materialism, or even agnosticism; for it makes no statement about God. It just ignores him. It finds all the answers and all the ends it wants in man's immediate situation.

Perhaps the best definition of "the secular" is "the partially wordly"; but secularism takes into account only part of the nature of reality. As a result it has left man in a state of insecurity — an insecurity from which man has moved on to such pseudo-religions as scientific humanism, nationalism and communism.

From the Church's point of view, the insecurity of secularism will be our point of contact with it, and provides a door of opportunity for preaching the Christian Gospel.

Moreover secularism also exists within the Church, as an incomplete attitude to reality. It is important for the Church to clear its own thinking of the secular outlook.

### b) *Scientific humanism*

This has been one of the main roots of secularism, and we saw the phrase of the Chinese thinker Hu Shih, quoted by Bishop Tsu, to be our best definition of the attitude of the scientific humanist, "With my head and my two hands, all things are possible".

First, we distinguished scientific method from scientific humanism. Scientific method is the way of observation, calculation and measurement, and the use of the law of cause and effect. There was nothing in this, we thought, contradictory to the Christian faith. We should be grateful for it, as a gift of God, helping man to understand the world.

In other words, we do not criticize scientific method, but we do criticize the larger claims of scientific humanism. The latter makes a claim in the realm of knowledge "that *that* alone is knowledge, which is demonstrable by scientific method". It finds the world in fact to be self-explanatory — to be explained in terms of itself, rather than in terms of the revelation of reality to be found in the Incarnation.



Scientific humanism also makes the claim that scientific method is capable of determining religious and ethical values. In fact, the opposition of Christian thinking today comes more from sociology and psychology than from the physical sciences. We would also criticize scientific humanism at the point of its optimistic faith in the possibility of achieving a perfect society, through the application and extension of the scientific method. How far does modern science adopt a scientific humanistic view? We noted that many top-level scientists of today were aware of the inadequacy of the above extravagant claims and were convinced of a mystery at the heart of things. But on the other hand, the general public has an unwarranted confidence and a naive faith in these larger claims. The Church must bear this in mind in the presentation of the Gospel.

#### c) *Nationalism*

Nationalism is a natural, given factor, for which one should be grateful. The Christian has definite responsibilities to his nation. But nationalism has limits and it is the duty of the Church to speak when those limits are past. There is in fact some conflict between the claims of nationalism and of the Church, but here we had to be content with the general conclusion that national citizenship is at many points in conflict with our citizenship in the community of God's people. Further exploration of this problem is important for fulfilment of Christian community and effectiveness in world-wide witness. We conclude that the Church has established some valuable foot-paths between nations, but that these should be developed into highways.

#### d) *Communism*

We agreed with Marxian communism that the field of history is the field where the main issues of life are decided — remembering that Marx was a Jew, with a strong messianic hope, even if without a true sense of human sin.

We saw communism as a salutary challenge to Christianity in its criticism of capitalist society and its emphasis on improvement of living conditions in various parts of the world.

But we also saw communism as a threat to Christianity in several ways. It demands a loyalty infringing upon our loyalty to God. It has an ideology at some points contrary to the Christian faith. First, in the words of John Bennett, "it regards opponents as obstacles to be removed, rather than persons to be redeemed". Its policy makes it more effective than Christianity and it does not have to bother itself about moral considerations of means to the end. Secondly, "it absolutizes a particular movement in history and promises that this movement will bring redemption".

In facing this, we stressed the following important points: we should approach the communists as a body of people to be won to Christ. And to do this, Christian leaders must have a thorough understanding of communism and general wisdom in meeting it.

Further, Christians find themselves in four different situations. First, in non-communist areas, Christians should maintain a sensitiveness to social injustices; seek personal contacts with communists and make "critiques" of the situation for the guidance of students, as done recently by the Madras S.C.M. Secondly, in countries where communism has led to armed conflict, we observed that certain Christians had seen fit to join the resistance, others to join the communists, and again, others to take no part in the armed conflict. Thirdly, in communistic-dominated areas, we noted that some members of the Church have used this domination as an opportunity for Christian witness, and have resolved to continue that witness to the end. Also some Christians have become members of the Communist Party, or are active in the Government, in order to make Christian influence more deeply felt. Fourthly, in communist-controlled countries, the Church has little freedom. There may be a Christian witness in Christians becoming outstanding members in community service, but it is difficult to see how witness can be really effective. Christians just have to believe that witness should be continued, in the faith that God can use their obedience for results beyond anything they can see.

## 5.

**Christianity and the Machine Age**a) *Positive values*

The group is agreed that we must not be negative in our thinking. The machine age is God's gift to our day, either for use or abuse, and is a given factor in our society.

Though man has been degraded by being treated as a tool, his community and family life torn up by their roots, we insist that this is not the fault of the machine, as such, but of those who own and control it.

The representatives of the younger churches in our midst believe that it is impossible to overemphasize the fact that the machine age is to be welcome as an opportunity for redemption from age-long poverty and wretchedness.

It is agreed that while the machine age could temporarily be retarded by political, social or economic forces, it will in fact continue and is to be accepted as desirable because the following benefits are derived from it:

1. The machine age has made the world *one* as never before. This constitutes both an opportunity for evangelism and a challenge for the Church.
2. It has provided the communication and distribution which makes possible the effective feeding and clothing of our world.
3. Superstitions and inadequate religious concepts are weakened, but true religious experience is capable of growth. Life is a dynamic process and our religion must at *every* point be related to life.
4. Christians have separated life into compartments. We are compelled in the machine age to unify life under God.
5. New leisure-time is afforded which the Church may utilize in its programme of evangelism.
6. A new working-class has been consolidated, and out of its life has emerged communism and other forces of social revolt in our time. The Church must gratefully accept

the power of this heaven and relate its message to these forces in terms of repentance and obedience to the will of God.

b) *New work for the Church*

Within this situation the Church must do its work.

1. There is need for pioneer groups to experiment in vital forms of evangelism, such as ordained workers in factories and laymen who accept an apostolate to their fellow-workers in their jobs. The Church must point out to those who control both nationalised and also individual industries of the corrupt use of power and of their ultimate responsibility to God.
2. In the African mining regions, no churches are to be found in mine compounds. Only by incarnation — identification with their lives — can the Church help these people.
3. There is need for some missionaries to develop real understanding of industrial conditions and use their national prestige (when they have it!) to support the local church in any protest which must be made against radical injustice.
4. Through trade unions, personnel management, and a variety of welfare activities, new possibilities of relation to the workers are opened. The success of these, however, depend upon the willingness of the Church to identify itself with the struggle of the workers and proclaim the essentially prophetic message of the "good news" of the "acceptable day of the Lord" (cf. Luke 4 : 19 and Lev. 25).
5. The Church will explore the Bible to rediscover God's message to total man and the whole society. This can be brought home to every Christian, employer and employee, in his worship, if the Church emphasizes the offering of bread and wine in the Eucharist as typifying all man's labour, there being no communion without common offering ; and also the concept of *Christ Ouvrier* — Christ the Worker — as emphasized in the French Workers Movement.



c) *Social witness*

This social witness of the Church, we saw, has become decadent along with the weakening of direct church authority. Neither papal decree, canon law, nor the quoting of the biblical text is an easy solution. This ethical dilemma is perhaps the greatest challenge to the ecumenical movement.

d) *Moral theology*

The machine age involves new questions for moral theology and ethics.

1. Should Christians support strikes ? If so, when ?
2. What significance for the Church has working-class solidarity ?
3. What has the Church to say to those who control industry ?  
It is *not* enough to tell them that "prayer is better than sleep" !

## 6.

**Communication**

Communication is one of the most important aspects of evangelism. Our evangel will be hidden from the world unless we are able to communicate it. In every age, in every country, to every group of people, we have to discover afresh how to put our message forward so that it is heard as good news by those to whom we bring it. It is always the same Gospel ; it does not depend upon, or change according to, the needs of men ; it depends upon the will and purpose of God, *but*, unless it speaks directly and familiarly to each man or group of men, it will not be a Gospel for *them*.

a) *Entering into the experience of others*

The first point we want to make is one which did not become explicit until late in our discussion, and one which Bishop Tsu's address and the following discussion helped to bring to the

surface. But we believe it to be the fundamental issue in communication. It is this. The question of *how* we are going to proclaim the Gospel as a reality, as a saving power, e. g. to the working classes, the university, the ancient culture of China, a communist, or a Moslem — is more than a matter of technique, or of translation, or even primarily of preaching. It is a matter of entering into the life and experience of the people with whom we are working. As Bishop Tsu said, we must understand the controlling ideas of their lives; know the bases of their prejudices, their history and their culture; understand their needs, so that we are not trying to preach to them from the outside, trying to draw them from the outside into an unfamiliar situation, but so that we *enter with them* into the heart of a Gospel which does not seem alien to them, a Gospel which speaks to them in a living language, in *their* language, because it comes to them in *their* patterns of thought, in *their* mental climate, in words which have the same emotional overtones as the words which they use themselves about their own life and thought.

How is this to be done? We do not have the answer to that question. It is an immense one, and we came only to the beginning of it. But we can give you three things we thought of. 1) It has been said that the first task of an evangelist is to be a good listener. Before he talks he must let others talk, and he must listen intently so that he may know how they think and feel. This point came out with particular emphasis when we were discussing the relation between Christianity and other religions — though we were not all agreed that we could use a term such as “other religions”. It is significant for the Church that we were told by a member of the group that Moslems knew more of Christianity than Christians knew of Mohammedism. 2) We have to “empty ourselves” to be prepared to give up things which are dear to us in our heritage and in our national upbringing, and to share to the fullest the life of the people with whom we are working, to become one with them. That was so much of the power and effectiveness of St. Paul’s missionary work that he could become all things to all men for the sake of the Gospel. 3) A paramount factor in communication is the witness of the Christian life which time and time again has influenced people more than the spoken word.

b) *Radio and drama*

There are powerful forces at work today in communities of men which shape public opinion — literature, press, radio, films, drama. It is these which condition men's minds. People turn to them for guidance more than they turn to the Church; they look to them for a pattern of life, for a standard of morality, for the truth. The Church has got to accept this fact and acknowledge their power. But it is vitally necessary that the Church should take these powers to herself, learn to use them effectively and by her use of them to sanctify them and make of them powerful agents in communicating the Gospel. We did not have time to deal with all these.

In *radio* the Church has still a great deal to learn, though much good work is being done in conditioning people's minds so that they are more ready to receive the Gospel, and in some outstanding instances touching in a personal way people who would not otherwise be touched by the Church. It is doubtful whether the broadcast of services by the Church is effective, mainly because the technique of broadcasting is completely different from that of preaching and the same methods will not work. Also those who listen are usually those within the sphere of the Church's influence in any case. Much more effective have been experiments such as Dorothy Sayer's plays *The Man Born To Be King* which proved to be a powerful means of evangelism in Britain and Australia; also study circles on "What is Christianity?" in Denmark, the "Church's Forum of the Air" in Australia, and "My Faith and My Job" in Great Britain.

As for *drama*, this has always been one of the most natural ways by which man has expressed himself, also it has a primary place in worship, in the sacrament of Holy Communion itself, as a re-enactment of the drama of the Passion. So the Church should use it both directly in presenting the Gospel and indirectly in underlining Christian morality and in pointing the way to the faith. But it must be good drama, technically good, able to compete with commercial drama; it must express the fulness of the Christian Gospel, and it needs to be presented by Christians as an expression of their faith. We discussed the use of spontaneous drama in East Africa and also in the West among both adults and

children, where the theme had become so real to those who were presenting it that they lived their parts naturally, supplying dialogue and actions as they went along. This kind of drama has a vitality which gives it an important place in the communication of the Faith.

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The Christian Church is ordained by God to carry the Gospel to all people, and we who are the Church have to be the means by which that Gospel is conveyed. It has to be contained in the frail vessels of our personality and our corporate life. Our prayer then must continually be that God's power may bring us to life and make of us fit instruments for the communication of His Gospel.

## 7.

### **Evangelism**

Throughout all the discussions our group has been aware of the urgency of the Church's evangelistic task. The call of Christ and the needs of the world have appeared to us with impelling force. The spirit of the old slogan, "The evangelisation of the world in this generation", is more than ever necessary today. It is in this sense of urgency that we came to the following conclusions, remembering all the time that God has His own ways of bringing men to Himself.

#### a) *The Bible*

We believe that the Word of God has converting power. Thus, the distribution of the Bible, or parts of it, is a valuable means of evangelism.

The Word of God should, however, be followed, wherever possible, by the witness and personal challenge of the Church. But we recognise that members of the Church are often ignorant of the Bible and of the biblical way of life. We feel that there is a definite need for more biblical preaching and teaching.

The Bible is not self-explanatory in all its parts, and experience with educated non-Christians, and even "nominal" Christians, shows that this is a very real difficulty in evangelism,



especially as regards the Old Testament. We regard as a vital necessity, the production not only of more books about the Bible, but, more importantly, of up-to-date introductions to *books of the Bible itself*, making for its more intelligent reading and understanding.

b) *Evangelism in non-Christian religions and cultures*

Here, we are convinced that everything depends on the attitude of evangelists. We must ever keep in mind that the centre of evangelism is not a particular form of Christianity, but Christ Himself. Care should therefore be taken to avoid offending what is good in the thought and life of other religions. As an Indian delegate put it, "What is un-Christian should be abolished, but what is merely 'non-Christian' should be preserved and baptised into the Church of Christ".

The Church, as the Body of Christ, should be a living community transforming the culture by bringing the spirit of the Gospel into every sphere of life. Examples of this are the Ashrams in India.

We also feel that the striving of Christians alongside non-Christians for social justice in educational, medical work, cooperatives, etc., is an effective means of transforming the culture of a non-Christian country.

During our discussions under this section, we became convinced of the pressing need for the careful, scientific survey of the sociological aspects of the Church's strategy in any particular area. We gather that in this field experiments are being made in the U.S.A., which should be brought into the service of the Church in its task of integrating the life of the community.

c) *Methods of evangelism*

1. *Educational and medical work.* While all teaching and healing must be done in Christ's name, we feel strongly that it should not be employed exclusively for converting purposes. This work is the Church's answer to Christ's demand to teach and to heal, and involves high skill and a deep sense of caring for pupils and patients, taking into account their whole environment. It is in this total sense that we can best fulfil our evangelistic mission. It is, however, essential that the local Church should regard this ministry as a most important part of its own task and share fully in it.

Where preaching of the Gospel is, or may be, forbidden, we are persuaded that there is a real call to the very difficult job of staying on and carrying out our commission of the teaching and healing in the spirit of patience and humble love, for we believe that through this God will open a way. One has only to recall the labours of such pioneers as Robert Morrison of China in the early nineteenth century.

2. *Modern techniques.* These are gifts of God, and should therefore be used not only with caution, but also with the high efficiency that they demand. The Church is too prone to employ them merely as counters to their secular use, and to do so badly. Besides, it must always be kept in mind that they are not substitutes for personal encounter in our evangelistic activities.

d) *Strategy of evangelism*

We are unanimous that missionaries and missionary societies are still needed, and will be for a long time to come. But we feel that the indigenous churches should increasingly decide the strategy of the Church, and thus the use of missionaries whether as leaders, or as workers, under local leadership.

Lastly, we regard the term "Younger Churches" as unhelpful and theologically unsound. The Church is neither young nor old, but simply the Church of Christ in any particular area. The realisation of this fact would more truly represent that partnership in Christ for which are all praying and working.

8.

### **The Life of the Congregation**

The story is told of a London vicar that, feeling unwell, he called upon his doctor; he complained of restlessness. "Do you talk in your sleep?" asked the doctor. "No, mostly in other people's" replied the vicar! All too often our congregations are sleeping partners to their pastors. It was the task of our group to discover in what respects they could be awakened. Most of our conclusions, whilst not so startlingly new or momentous as to make you leap up in your seats, would nevertheless be revolutionary if we were really to take them seriously at last.

We found it necessary to start with a definition of the Church and were able to accept that of the Edinburgh Conference of 1937 "The Church is the Body of Christ and the Blessed Company of all faithful people, whether in heaven or on earth, the Communion of Saints. It is at once the revelation of God's gracious purpose in Creation and Redemption, and the continuous organ of His grace in Christ by the Holy Spirit, who is its pervading life and who is constantly hallowing all its parts".

We discussed the responsibility of the congregation in four areas of its Christian life.

a) *Responsibility for evangelism*

All evangelism must spring from the strengthening, power-inspired fellowship of the Church and all evangelism must include the presentation of the call to live the new life within that fellowship; men must be challenged to accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour and to serve their new Lord in His Church. It is the responsibility of the congregation as a whole and of each individual member. ("Woe unto me if I preach not the Gospel"). We thought helpful the formation of cells: small organisms within the congregation meeting together for prayer and study and waiting upon the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. These cells will be the power-houses for evangelism. They must not become ingrowing pietistic groups. They should be integrated into the total life of the congregation.

b) *Responsibility for social action*

The basis for Christian social action is the Christian doctrine of the nature of man as the child of God, made in His image, for whom Christ died. For those that are without, the Church yearns with the love of its Master and Lord; it bears witness against every iniquity and injustice in their common life; this witness is itself evangelistic. It is not enough, however, for the members of the congregation to undertake social work, welfare, ambulance work, etc. within the appropriate organisations. They must be prepared to initiate social legislation in the state, to get out into the world and "get stuck in". But whatever else they

do not do, they *must* attempt to remedy iniquitous situations within their own congregation; class distinction must go; in times of unemployment the more fortunate must assist the less fortunate; the race problem as we see it in South Africa and the southern States of the United States of America must be faced.

c) *Responsibility for the family*

The Christian believes that the family is a fundamental unit of society because God made it so. It was intended for man's good — to be an enrichment to life, the place where men can learn to live together with patience, trust, loyalty and love. Its basis is the man-woman relationship of which God said "It is not good that man should be alone". It is a point of no small significance that Jesus Christ was born into a family, the root of the re-created humanity was planted firmly in the family. The industrialisation and speed-up of modern life makes difficult in some areas the maintenance of a worship-centred home. We were agreed that the family must be Christ-centred and a worshipping family but not agreed on the Tambaram finding that "Children should be taken to Church with their parents in regular corporate worship from an early age". Whilst some strongly agreed with this finding, others felt that it was more dangerous than valuable in that it developed an antipathy in them and that it was better to arrange separate and suitable services for them. The important recommendation, we agreed, was that children must be encouraged to develop habits of private devotion and corporate worship from an early age.

We deplored the hesitancy of some sections of the Church to stress the fact that divorce is contrary to the Christian conception of marriage ("whom God hath joined let no man put asunder"); but one or two members expressed the view that, when the sinful situation has been reached in which divorce is contemplated, the only course of action may be to separate for the consequences of continued living together may be even more sinful. Ideally the congregation should be the place to which such problems are brought. The whole question was one which required much more thought devoted to it.



d) *Responsibility within the world-wide Church*

At the outset we stressed that the congregation must be conscious of its situation within an ecumenical Church. The responsibility must not be passed off on to missionary societies. How can this consciousness be ensured? Amongst others we had three principal suggestions to make.

1. Two-way traffic between "older" and "younger" churches; members of the "younger" must visit the "older" to present the picture of the new situation within their field. A missionary on furlough is very tempted to lay on only the more romantic colours.
2. A true picture *must* be painted — old literature, exhibits, films and technique must be scrapped even if the consequent loss of glamour and romance means an initial fall in financial support from disillusioned congregations.
3. A period of the missionary's training should be done in an ecumenical training institute as, for example, at Bossey, so that the missionary may take with him to his new area of work a very real conception of the ecumenical setting of his work.

## 9.

**The Christian Home**

The Tambaram Report states that no two institutions need each other so fundamentally as church and home. Our group saw as its task the interpretation of this statement especially as it applies to the present situation in the growing Church. In order to have a realistic picture of family life throughout the world we surveyed it in China, Japan, India, Africa, South America and Indonesia. There were marked contrasts between East and West, e. g. the Western notion of romantic love and the tradition in some Eastern countries of arranged marriages.

a) *The Christian view*

To find a satisfactory answer to this question we had first to discover the Christian view of the family. We were particularly struck by these facts: Firstly in the Old Testament the

married state was considered an accepted fact of God's creation whereas in the New Testament there is a radically new step in emphasizing that both husband and wife are redeemed by Christ and share together in the fellowship of the Church. In the New Testament the family tie is not the prior tie for Christians; therefore the family is not absolutely indispensable.

Secondly, we were bound to ask ourselves, "What is the unique feature of Christian marriage?" We agreed that both parties must be convinced that God has brought them together. This fact finds its expression in the Christian marriage service with its deep meaning. There is naturally throughout the world a variety of marriage customs. We consider it most undesirable to impose Western customs on the Christians of other countries. Christians should keep their traditional customs where these do not conflict with Christian principles. Encouragement should be given to the development of new features to express the uniquely Christian meaning of customs.

Thirdly, we had to consider in what respects a Christian home differs from the average good home. There is no difference between the good home and the Christian home, except that Christ is the centre of the Christian home. This means that it is clearly recognized that sin is preventing the realization of perfect family life. There is therefore a daily dependence on God.

#### b) *Church and home*

Having cleared up these questions on which we have just very briefly touched in this report we returned to the original problem "Why do Church and home need each other?" The Christian home needs the Church because it can only be Christian in so far as the members are vitally related to the deeper fellowship of the Church. The Church on the other hand needs the Christian home in as much as the home can demonstrate to society the Church in miniature. In this sense the home can be a great evangelizing agent because it is a clear object-lesson in Christian life and faith. It is in the intimacy of the home that the most exacting demands are made on our Christian faith and character.

The Church is vitally concerned with the strengthening of Christian home life. With the anti-Christian pressure in some

parts of the world today Church life may disappear publicly and the home may be the only guardian of Christian truth and worship. We have seen some moving instances of this during the last few years.

We discovered numerous ways in which the Christian home can be strengthened. In approaching non-Christians we should make the family the object of evangelism as well as the individual. Evangelism should be more balanced, e. g. where there is a woman specially trained to work amongst Moslem women there should also be someone to work amongst the men. This avoids one-sided evangelism. Both husband and wife are touched, and the object of our evangelism is a new Christian home, and not just one new Christian.

Space forbids further mention of many original and valuable points which we made. Some of these issues were not faced in the Tambaram Report, indeed they have largely arisen as a result of events in the last eleven years. Such new problems and issues in Christian family life are only one more example of the striking difference between Tambaram and Whitby.

## 10.

### Christian Leadership

#### a) *The task of the missionary*

In the present-day relationships of the older and younger churches, the task of the *missionary*, as one of the primary Christian leaders, is that of developing a *real and close partnership* with the indigenous Church. This must be both the immediate aim and the method of his missionary work in order that the Christian message may be most effectively presented.

1. He should himself, before he goes out to the mission field, be as adequately trained as possible in the traditions, culture and way of life of the people among whom he is to work.
2. Though in some areas there is still an urgent need for pioneer work, the missionary's task today will increasingly lie in organising and assisting in the training of those

who will become both the ordained and the lay leaders of the indigenous Church.

3. In the education of those who will become the clergy, there is a need to provide a sound theological training that is not alien, because of its Westernised conceptions, to the thinking of the indigenous people and to see that in practical training both in the presentation of the Gospel, and in the introduction of forms of worship, methods will be adopted that are most suited and familiar to the people. Qualified nationals should, whenever possible, be given posts in the training schools established. The missionary's work will still include that of advising and overseeing, or of organising and actively cooperating in the missions schools and colleges.
4. Training undertaken by the missionary as a leader sent to participate in the work of the indigenous Church will be incomplete if it embraces only those wishing to be ordained in the service of the Church. The value of the assistance of an ever-increasing group of *trained lay leaders* and workers in the Church cannot be too greatly emphasised. The Church leader will have partially failed if he does not inspire the lay leader, and the layman who is qualified will not be fully sharing in the evangelism of his people if he is not assisting the minister, or missionary, to the best of his abilities. A much wider recourse to training courses provided by ecumenical institutes and theological and Bible colleges for laymen is recommended. It will be the missionary's duty, either himself to train certain lay leaders, or to place them in the way of obtaining further training and to suggest to them tasks they may best perform in the life of the Church, both in its pastoral and pioneering evangelistic aspects.
5. So that the work of the missionary and of the indigenous clergy and lay leaders may be fully reinforced, contact with all non-national Christian workers on the field should be made. It is emphasised that they will be contributing greatly to the service of God if they play their full part in the life of the indigenous Church.



Sending churches might contact all workers such as government teachers, doctors, nurses, social service workers, engineers, scientists, and government servants before they go out, and provide training courses, as at the London University, for those interested. In this way the new approach to evangelism by assuming the full participation of all Christians, not merely the "professional" missionaries, in the work of the indigenous Church will yield wider scope and greater opportunities in fields barely touched hitherto. In view of the fact that the wives of many ministers and missionaries do undertake a great deal of pastoral work, it was noted with satisfaction that it is becoming more customary for women going out to the mission field with their husbands to train fully with them beforehand, or to take short term courses in order to equip them for the special work they can perform among women and the teaching of women and children which they may be required to do.

b) *The layman's task*

In considering the task of a leader in both the older and the younger churches, the need was emphasised for the *lay worker* to be inspired and encouraged to speak out, to proclaim the truths he knows to be applicable to the whole of life and all the world.

1. More corporate training in the form of study and discussion groups would help the layman to retain his enthusiasm and give confidence for his task in his particular sphere.
2. More directions towards group activity, as in the cell, or community work of some Christian organisations, is needed under present conditions of secular "departmentalisations" in life.
3. In both branches of the churches the valuable experience of older members should be fully utilised by the minister, or missionary, to assist him in his organisational duties, and to train the younger members for youth work and pioneering evangelistic work in rural and village areas. It is recognised that everywhere today there is a gap in

the ranks of Christian leaders caused by two world wars and that therefore the need is underlined for using the talents and services of as many qualified people as possible, besides the minister or missionary, to train a sufficient number of younger workers.

c) *Mission schools*

The work and value of missions schools in relation to the task of training Christian leaders were discussed in detail.

1. It was agreed that they have a special place in the task of training selected people for evangelism. The sending churches should realise, however, the need for increasing the financial endowment of such schools since the standard of teaching is sometimes apt to suffer through inability to secure an adequate number of highly qualified teachers, particularly nationals, because of the low salaries paid in comparison with those of staffs in government schools.
2. Further, since it is evident that in some countries missions schools have been closed, or will soon be greatly restricted in their operations, the group would urge most strongly that an all-out drive be made now by all sending churches for Christian personnel to staff state schools. This would both serve against the time when governments might refuse to allow missions schools and keep Christians in the vanguard of workers on expanding educational schemes, and it would increase enormously the opportunities for evangelism. In the teaching methods of such workers there must be no attempt to maintain a basis of neutrality. The Christian teacher must use a specifically Christian approach.

d) *Recruiting*

There is a great need for recruits to the ranks of Christian leaders at home and abroad. Many are ignorant of the type of worker required, or uncertain as to where their particular capabilities would be of best service. Others are unable, through the circumstances of their national situation, or those of their churches, to offer their services for particular mission fields. We

suggest that a pool be created of committed Christians willing to serve for short, or long, periods whenever they may be required at home or overseas. In this way mission boards may call upon the services of all when they are wanted and the resources of the world-wide Church can be best deployed to meet the needs of the world-wide evangelistic mission.

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Christian vocation implies that all Christians witness in word and deed to the truth that God has given us and share what we have received for the glory of God and the upbuilding of His Kingdom. Specifically Christian leadership implies dedication of all our God-given gifts in the service, lay or clerical, to which God and the Church may call us. We recognise that no Christian leadership can be effective without, first and foremost, the stimulus of God and that only in response to the revelation made by God Himself can man impart God's message and his own compelling conviction of its truth.

## 11.

### Christian Education

#### *Some facts given by members of the group*

In Sweden Christianity is a required subject in state schools. In Germany the present situation is fluid. Owing to the absence of Christian education in the schools since 1933 there is a great shortage of teachers. In the Russian zone the teaching of Christianity by teachers of the schools is allowed only by special permit, while in the other zones there is liberty to teach Christianity in the schools. In England a varied state of affairs is combined with a tendency to more specific Christian training. In the United States of America school education in Christianity is not allowed owing to the constitutional separation of Church and State. In some states an experiment is being carried out with a release time once a week for education given by the Church. On the Gold Coast in Africa Christianity is an important subject both in governmental and in Church schools, i. e.

schools run by the missions. In the Minahassa Church of Indonesia, too, there are missionary as well as governmental schools. The former exist only on the primary level. In the governmental schools religious instruction is given only on the secondary level, voluntarily and to a small extent.

a) *What is meant by Christian education ?*

Christian education may mean the instruction of Christianity as subject. Is there also a special Christian education of other subject matters ? Every kind of education is coloured by the personality of the teacher. It seems likely that a Christian teacher will give a more specific character to his instruction of history, e. g., than to that of mathematics.

b) *How far is it right for a teacher to attempt to convert his pupils to Christianity ?*

This question brings in the question of religious liberty. Here it may be enough to emphasize that religious liberty need not necessarily lead to the exclusion of religious teaching, as in the United States. And the full exposure of a religion includes the challenge of the pupil. The same right of challenging the children to acceptance or rejection must be granted to Christianity where Christianity is taught as well as to other religions where they are taught. But force and pressure are of no real value in this religious challenge.

c) *For what purpose do Christian schools exist in non-Christian countries ?*

On the one hand God's love compels the Church to banish ignorance where the State will not banish it. On the other hand the same love compels us to draw people to Christ, convert them. The evangelistic task and the educational task must not be separated, nor must they be confused, which means that teaching is good in itself and not only as a means to conversion. The group heard direct witness from the Gold Coast, Palestine, India, Ceylon, Indonesia, that school work is invaluable to the Church as a contact with children and their homes.



- d) *Should Christian schools continue if the State does not permit their religious teaching ?*

As the aim of the Christian school is not only to evangelize but also to banish all kinds of ignorance, there are good reasons to stay open even when direct religious instruction is forbidden. But it was witnessed from Germany and Indonesia that if the Church had acted in this way during the Nazi and Japanese regimes, respectively, other religions would have characterized the education ; and so the schools had been closed.

- e) *Should the staff be entirely Christian ?*

On the one hand it was emphasized that there must be a solid Christian front, which means that the staff of a Christian school should be entirely Christian. In case of shortage subjects might be dropped, and non-Christian teachers should be employed only exceptionally. The group heard it stated from Palestine that the presence of any non-Christian on the staff inevitably weakened the witness of a Christian school, but that it was unavoidable to teach Hebrew with Jewish, non-Christian, teachers. On the other hand teaching is good in itself, also when performed by non-Christians. Especially in India, most Christian schools have not experienced any difficulties when employing non-Christian teachers. A speaker from Ceylon went so far as to argue that Christian schools ought to include non-Christian teachers in their staffs, provided that they were decent and loyal. Otherwise the non-Christian pupils would feel overrun by the Christian arguments of the teachers and would not take the Christian challenge seriously. Evidently, the answer to the given question must differ in different situations.

- f) *A Christian — what entitles him to call himself such ?*

In connection with speaking of a solid Christian front the question arose : where should the frontier line be drawn ? Perhaps the best answer is that a Christian is characterized by the desire to be a Christian and to live a Christian life. But the group found it useful to see where its members found the essence of their own Christian beliefs. The answers reflected their very various backgrounds. They included : baptism into the Church ;

personal encounter with Christ which changes you to the Christian way or confirms you in that way; the certainty of daily strength from Christ; by continuing to do the atoning work of God, the Father, as seen in Christ, to realise the Kingdom of God; the conviction that Jesus is your personal saviour.

## 12.

### Medical Missions

This working group was an embryo World Medical Association, with representatives from medical schools in Holland, Germany, Switzerland, Hungary, Canada, Scotland and Great Britain, who also had experience of medical missions in China and Africa. The following is only a brief summary of the various problems studied.

#### a) *The why of medical missions*

We agreed that the reasons why Our Lord Himself healed the sick and why He commissioned His disciples to do the same were, firstly, His strong conviction that this was part of His Father's programme of redemption (Luke 4: 18); secondly, because this is a natural practical expression of His human sympathy and love; thirdly, because healing the sick body symbolises redemption for the whole human person.

We further agreed that for the Christian physician, the emphasis on the practice of the art of medicine, as glorified in the Hippocratic oath, or on the perfection of the modern medical sciences, should be transferred to the patient as a child of God, who needs the services which the doctor and his assistants can give.

#### b) *Science and religion*

We failed to discover any real conflict between scientific and religious truth. The Christian doctor has a unique opportunity to combine a thorough scientific training and approach with an understanding of the spiritual forces which are often seen so clearly in the process of healing of both body and mind. To the Christian doctor the application of the knowledge gained by

scientific investigation is just as much a sacrament of service, as are his prayers for the Spirit of God to complete the work of healing.

c) *The medical missionary*

The basic requirement for a medical missionary, we agreed, is that he must be a sincere Christian, first and foremost. As far as his professional training goes, it must be sound and complete, and obtained in an institution freely accredited in his own country. If possible the training should also include a study of the branches of medical practice applicable to the locality to which he intends to go — for example, tropical medicine.

He should be a capable doctor, adaptable, with a genuine love for people, and interested enough in them to study their language and their way of life. It is absolutely essential that he be physically fit and emotionally stable.

While on the field he must keep abreast of recent developments in medical knowledge, and he must seek opportunities to refresh his knowledge and to gain new skills during some of his time home on furlough.

He must take the initiative in planning his work in the field, so that he will not find himself so exhausted by the demands for healing the sick that he has no time, or energy, left to train assistants, or to do preventive work in his own and surrounding communities.

d) *Medical work and the total task of the Church*

Medical work in the hospital, or in the community, should always be clearly related to all other Christian activities, and a spirit of teamwork should develop between doctor and nurse, teacher and pastor. The doctor should request the constant interest in his patients and prayers for them by the local Christian community; he should also be ready and willing to take part in the non-medical activities of the Christian community. Only in this way can the Church witness to the total life of the community and meet all its needs.

If the hospital is thus to be only an integral part of the Church, we agreed that it cannot be placed in the charge of a non-Christian

physician. In larger institutions the services of a non-Christian staff member could be profitably used, but even such a member must be included in the Christian fellowship and teamwork.

We agreed that even if Christian preaching is forbidden in any country, yet the Church must accept an opportunity to minister to the medical needs of the people if such an opportunity is offered.

Personal religious liberty should be given (especially to non-Christians) in a Christian hospital, but we felt that this should not include freedom for organised corporate non-Christian worship.

Long after other parts of the work of the Church become self-supporting, the medical work may continue to depend on outside financial help from the Church abroad, if it is to carry out a high standard of work, and self-support should not be made an immediate objective. This will be even more true of Christian medical schools and training institutions.

#### e) *Preventive medicine*

We agreed that the call to more preventive work in all medical institutions should be re-emphasised. However a suitable balance should be made between preventive and curative medicine. The Christian medical service to a community should reach far beyond the hospital into all areas of the community life, and should reflect its efficiency in improved hygienic living.

### 13.

## **The Church and the Jewish World**

The relation of the Christian Church to the Jewish world is one of the most neglected, yet one of the most important, areas for study and missionary work today. The report of the working group can only suggest beginnings in the fields of anti-semitism, Zionism, the historic relation of the Church and Judaism, and the approach of the Church to the Jews.

#### a) *Anti-semitism*

The roots of anti-semitism are fundamentally religious, and not only economic and social. Whether one studies the Old



Testament, or the history of the last two thousand years, it becomes apparent that any chosen people, conscious of their calling, incur the wrath of those who do not believe in God, i. e. of pagans.

Further, anti-semitism within the Church may be characterized as latent paganism, which is not limited to the "nominal Christian". Of worth is the slogan of Dr. Conrad Hoffman (Secretary of the International Committee on the Christian Approach to the Jews), "Where anti-semitism thrives, Christianity cannot exist, where Christianity thrives, anti-semitism cannot exist."

#### b) *Zionism*

Zionism is not a true religious movement in the tradition of the Jewish Church. Although Judaism is a race, a nation, and a religion, bound in one, Zionism itself lacks that conviction about the coming of the Messiah, which characterizes the religious concept of the return of Israel to Jerusalem. Rather, Zionism is a national movement, to be viewed in the pattern of current national movements in the East, which makes use of the religious element to further its political ends.

Because of lack of time, the group was unable to study the issues concerning Jewish or Arab rights to Palestine. In understanding Zionism in particular, and the Jewish situation in general, we of the Church must remember our guilt for the deeds in the name of Christ, which continue to this day, that have given rise to the Jewish crisis. Anti-semitism has been a contributing factor to present ills, and the persecution by which one third of Jewry has been annihilated does not come from Germany alone. To quote Professor Walter Horton: "All of us who have even indirectly encouraged that sinister and diabolic trend called anti-semitism, or given unintended aid to it by the unconscious implications of our words... and not seen it for the truly monstrous thing it is... all of us are linked to the tragedy of the Warsaw Ghetto... thousands of miles of land and sea between us and the scene of the crime are not enough to prove an *alibi*"<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> *The Church and Anti-Semitism*, by WALTER M. HORTON. Issued by the International Missionary Council's Committee on the Christian Approach to the Jews, 1948.

c) *Historic relation of the Church and Judaism*

In the light of Romans 11, it was held that the new Israel is the continuation of the old Israel in so far as Jews and Gentiles accept Jesus Christ. Further, it is against the very nature of the Jews to deny Him. From this point on, however, the group was of divided opinion. The minority statement of the leader reads as follows: "Judaism is a sign of God's judgment and mercy, together; and there is a future for the Jewish nation when it shall accept Christ. In that light, it should be seen that the appearance of the Church in this present time, consisting of more than 90 % Gentile Christians, is only an interim figure lasting until the coming back of the whole Israel to God. At that point the great mission time of the world will start, because the true (the chosen) people of God's messengers will then understand their vocation. In the meantime, the Church has the task of preaching the Gospel to the Jews, and this in the biblical order: to the Jew first, and then also to the Greek".

Though differing in part with the above the majority opinion agrees, with all emphasis, that the Christian Church must take seriously the mission to the Jews. It is not only that the Jews are owed a great debt for their contributions of the Old and New Testaments, and for their sufferings, but also that they are strategically located as a missionary people. Jews are spread geographically; and, even more significant, they stand at different economic and intellectual levels from which they may do invaluable missionary work. The Jewish people still have the heritage of the East which would deepen the Church's understanding of the Bible for modern times, guard against the dangers of Hellenism, and, if the chance is not lost by waiting, provide a tangible link between East and West. On the matter of priority, however, the majority felt that the Jews, since their rejection of Christ, become as other missionary areas. The important point is that they *are* a missionary area that must not be neglected.

d) *The Christian approach to the Jews*

St. Paul gives a clue to the approach to the Jews when he speaks of "provoking" them to jealousy (Rom. 11: 14). The Church is, by faith, the true Israel, and it must provoke the

Jews to a desire for Christ by living up to that faith. Herein lies the burden of the unity of the Church, for the sin of disunity is a stumbling block to the whole of Israel.

Furthermore, the Church must preach Jesus Christ as He is, the Lord of life, the divine Son of God, the only Saviour, otherwise, we have nothing to offer Judaism.

Finally, the Church itself, through the churches themselves, must take over the mission to the Jews, though gratefully acknowledging the work of those varied societies that have so long borne this task. The approach of the individual parish to the Jew is involved in this statement, but the study group lacked time to develop the arguments concerning this point.

The "sense of the meeting" may be summed up in the appeal that the Church be concerned not only with the political and social acceptance of the Jews in society, but that Christians should constantly feel the burden which led St. Paul to say, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved". (Rom. 10 : 1.)

# Our Task in the Growing Church

J. C. HOEKENDIJK

## *The danger of ecumenical mythology*

I am not going to summarise the foregoing reports, because summarising supposes that we are at an end. It always has a final and definite character. And I should like to stress that at the end of this Conference we are just at the beginning. What we have done together is to push open the window and have a look on the World Church. That is a decision already; and a very important decision. It means that we have realised that we are not alone in our group, our congregation, our own church. But it is not more than the beginning. If we stop at this point, and the next very practical steps are not taken, our faith in the world-wide Church becomes mere mythology. There is plenty of ecumenical mythology already. It inevitably comes up in all sorts of conferences. It means that we only believe in important, great, convincing events; that on the ecumenical map we only see the hill-tops, and that tracing the history of the world-wide Church is just jumping from one summit to another: Edinburgh, Jerusalem, Tambaram, Whitby, Amsterdam. This Woudschoten Conference has been for us such a hill-top. But the battles have to be fought and won in between the hills in the valley. And it is for us to decide whether Woudschoten will remain just such a thrilling experience, which we will always keep in grateful memory, or whether it will be an ever-potent, never-exhausted source-spring for action: mythology, or an inspiring vision that will lead to Christian imagination, simpler faith, and total consecration.

## *Five key words*

I feel that the reports of our Working Groups give us some directives for our next steps. You will find throughout all the



reports some guiding-lines, sign-posts for a fresh and new missionary impact in this world. We may attempt to integrate all our work done here into vital and aggressive action by reflecting upon five key words, which have already been used in a similar connection. Here they are: *Proclamation, Identification, Interpretation, Demonstration, Transformation.*

### *Proclamation*

"To preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives... to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4: 19), we are set in this world. This proclamation has to be a permanent feature of the Church, of us. It is a commandment. But much more than that. It is primarily a *gift*. Not only the contents of our message is the given Word. The apostolic message, as one of the groups reminded us, is not only a *recital of events* in which with impressive monotony the gifts of God are summed up. But proclamation itself, the act itself is primarily a gift — the means of grace, the way in which God prevents His Church from falling asleep and from cowardly conformity to this world. We are not whipped into preaching; it is not a categorical imperative, but we are allowed, we are given, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord!

It is well that we should remind ourselves of the great commission. These words are not primarily a commandment, but they are fulfilment, grace. "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me". That is a fulfilment of the words in the Old Testament, when, in the last days, the Son of Man will be given "authority, power and glory" (Dan. 7: 13, 14). The last days — Christ says — have dawned. The Son of Man is glorified. He has the authority. Now all nations *will* come and honour Him. And in this fulfilment, in this act of God, in which He draws already all the people of the world to Himself there are to be found the words "Go, make disciples, baptise, teach". We are not only to preach good news, but the fact that we are allowed to preach, to proclaim the Gospel is already good news. It is a sign of the great fact that the world is conquered and overcome already; and now it is to be harvested and brought into the house of God.

### *Identification*

And we were told how this proclamation should be done — using all possible means, pioneering in new fields of communication and technique. But, more than anything else, it is a question not of technique, but of *identification* with the people to whom we proclaim. This does not mean an easy fraternisation, or a lighthearted sacrifice of principle in the cause of being “nice” to one another. One of the reports spoke about “emptying ourselves, becoming all things to all men”. It is a daring and adventurous exploration of our environment and we shall not understand it, so long as ideologies or other religions have not become a temptation to us. There is no use in making pronouncements against different “issues” of our day. What is required is utter self-identification with the spiritual longings and aspirations of our generation; in radical humility, sharing the sins and all that is behind the ideals, the frustration and the expectation.

This is of fundamental importance. Too often the Church speaks to the world as the elder brother in the parable of the prodigal son might have spoken to his younger prodigal brother: moving words, brilliant statements, a shrewd analysis of the situation, but at the same time an attitude of astonished contempt. The Church thinks (and we think) that we have to come down to the level of ideologies and other religions. And we do it very often with the secret desire that this “sacrifice” (as we call it) will not pass unnoticed.

I think that many of our discussions about points of contact, are inspired by the unwillingness to identify ourselves totally with the people amongst whom we are. Therefore they are so very often sterile and lead us nowhere else than into an intellectual game comparing religious ideas.

Identification or, as one report called it, incarnation, is or should be the form of our proclamation. Jesus Christ's utter self-identification with man gives us a pattern for our proclamation of the Gospel.

### *Interpretation*

In this way only we may try to give an *interpretation* of the life of man and society. “Christians must out-think, as well

as out-live and out-love, the rivals of their Faith for the loyalty of men". "We must be able to offer a truer, because profounder, interpretation both of the yearning of the souls of men and of the agony of their society". We heard about the social obsessions of life in the machine age, of the political obsessions in revolutionary Asia. This is the world in which the Church must grow. This is the place where we have to enter the mental climate, not to be fascinated by abstract "issues" and start a Don Quixote fight against them, but to understand and interpret what is going on.

Every word we say will be full of misunderstanding. A Christian interpretation of our contemporary society will often be an insult. It is only in humility and repentance that we may try to interpret the real situation. The first thing we always will discover is that communism, nationalism, Islam, political Romanism, are all judgments on the ineffectiveness of the Christian Church. Therefore we are not in a position to give an easy judgment. We cannot be merely *anti-communists*, etc. We owe repentant interpretation.

### *Demonstration*

This can be done only in a constructive way, if we recognise that the major medium of the message is not proclamation, but *demonstration*. An African once said about a missionary's work: "Your acts speak so loudly, that we cannot hear your words". And again and again we heard about Christians being the stumbling block to the acceptance of the Gospel. There is a converting power in Christian life, there is a convincing power in the Christian congregation. The first task of the Church is not to speak but to *be* the Church, a brotherhood, a community, where object lessons in Christian life and faith are given unintentionally. It should not be a factory for statements and pronouncements, but a laboratory, where Christians experiment in vital forms of evangelism, i. e. where they *translate the message into service*. This is a concern for the *whole* Church. The task of evangelism is wrought not so much by a simple proclamation of the Gospel as through the total impact of the *whole* Christian community on the group to be evangelised! The effective way of evangelism is to *be* the

Church and to pioneer in the field of social relationships and community service. The Gospel is not good advice, but *good news!*

### *Transformation*

This brings us to the last point : *transformation*. Nothing less than a radical renewal of man and his environment can be the end of the proclamation. In this revolutionary world only a revolutionary Church can live up to its task. If you do not want revolution in your hearts, you will meet revolution in the streets. Is this perhaps the secret of this revolutionary world of ours ? That *we*, who were supposed to be the leaven, have not always let the revolution into our hearts, and when Christianity ceases to be revolutionary, it ceases to be Christianity ?

But revolution is not the last word. Through revolution a transformation, a radical renewal, should be brought into this life of ours. With our message we should face *total man* in his total life, approaching him not as an individual, whose soul has to be saved for the coming day of doom, but approaching comprehensively the total unity of his life.

### *Our place in the Growing Church*

In these few rather commonplace words I think most of the elements of our discoveries this week are contained. It was with intention that I used exactly those words. They are taken mostly out of the reports of Whitby and other recent missionary publications. With the work of these ten days we have brought ourselves into a more general context. We have become a part — perhaps without realising it ! — of the missionary movement and placed ourselves in the ranks of those whose concern is primarily for *The Growing Church*. We are in this movement now and have to move forward, to leave our safe tenets and take to the trail through the wilderness of this world to reach the frontiers. We can only move onwards. When we are ready to take our position ; and that means, very practically, that we have to rethink and reconsider our place in the World Church.

I like the word *ecumenical reformation*, i. e. demonstration in actuality of world-wide Christianity. It is an illusion to say



that we are weak because we are divided. We are divided because we are weak. Therefore ecumenism implies always reformation. We cannot be the *Una Sancta*, when we do not believe and pray and act that we may become the *Una Sancta*. We have to reform our thoughts and renew our prayers and revise our action so that it will all fit into the pattern of the Holy Church. This Conference may have helped us to begin to do so. For all of us who will go on to Amsterdam there will be a chance to put this into practice. For all of us who go home now, there will be an opportunity to start, or to join, this ecumenical reformation. For some of us, who have made decisions during these days it will be a task to consecrate their lives to this ecumenical reformation — demonstration in actuality of world-wide Christian unity and world-wide evangelistic reality.

It is a growing Church we live in. Surprisingly growing! India three hundred converts a day, Africa two hundred a day, the Batak Church thirty a day. And still it is a minority, a saved and saving remnant. We are told that every year the world's population increases by twenty to thirty millions, and the non-Roman churches increase by about two millions. Please reflect on these statistics. The growing Church lives in an overwhelmingly hostile world, a frail minority and every year more so. "Sheep sent out in the midst of wolves", but this fold will not be frightened or terrified. In the midst of it goes the Lamb, the Lamb Who is the Good Shepherd, the good shepherd of the wolves also.

## Encounter with Toyohiko Kagawa

*On this Sunday morning in the early spring of 1948 the sun is shining brightly over the maze of Klondyke-like sheds, and on some brave garden bushes the buds are already swelling. I am on my way in the early morning through narrow suburban streets in western Tokyo to hear Toyohiko Kagawa preach in the church of Matsuzawa.*

*The people of Tokyo do not often get an opportunity to listen to him. This great little Christian of Japan, the man with the divine zeal for the improvement of society, the founder of the first real labour union of Japan and the instigator of the Japanese cooperatives, is travelling criss-cross through Japan nearly all the time preaching the Gospel untiringly, month after month. The Japanese, especially the people of the countryside, are open to the Gospel of Christ as never before. Kagawa turns up in Tokyo for some days, for a breathing spell with his family; he chairs and attends business meetings and then disappears again on his tour.*

### Morning worship

*Many years ago, when Kagawa conducted social settlements in Tokyo and struggled to set up cooperatives for the underprivileged and preached in a very unassuming wooden shed in this part of Tokyo, some missionaries came to him and offered him a stone church, a substantial building with vestry and everything! But it had to be taken apart and moved piecemeal. However, Kagawa had it done and the Matsuzawa Church stands on its new site in front of the old ramshackle chapel, like a sturdy little "church castle". Box and evergreen grow in front of the porch.*

*There was a Sunday School service going on in the old chapel when we arrived. On the verandah you saw rows and rows of little clog shoes and felt shoes. In Japanese churches, as in Japanese homes, people always move about in slippers or in socks. That saves a lot of cleaning!*

*The church is nearly filled with people. Most of them are young. This is typical of the situation in Japan at large. The older ones keep away, the young ones come.*

*The sun shines through the windows. To the right on the rostrum underneath the simple cross on the back wall, a small form of a man is seated clad in a worn black suit. He wears eye-glasses. In his lap is an open book which he picks up and studies at intervals. He is near-sighted and holds the book very close to his eyes. The man is Toyohiko Kagawa.*

*The service begins. I cannot read the text in the United Church of Japan hymn-book. But I know the tune. It is "Holy, holy, holy". I tune in with the words as I know them in my mother tongue. My neighbour in the pew, a missionary, shows me what passage Pastor Ogawa reads from the Bible: "Sing to the glory of God a new song".*

*While the congregation is singing another hymn Toyohiko Kagawa arises, walks across the rostrum to Pastor Ogawa, whispers something in this ear and then makes his way along the side aisle towards our pew. His hand glides cautiously along over the backs of the chairs which form the pew rows. Thin and transparent and worn, but with vital, purposeful and unconditioned goodwill, in the sunlight flooding through the church windows, comes up to me a person who has made a deeper impression on me than most contemporaries through his books with their radiation of an all-out willingness to serve, coupled with practical knowledge.*

*He shakes hands with my companion whom he already knows and then extends his hand towards me and says: "Welcome to us and to Japan. Would you be so good as to give us a brief message after the sermon". Whatever a message from me might be worth after a sermon by Kagawa — such a humble request from the main speaker himself cannot be rejected. It is evident that my friend, the veteran missionary, has sent advance word about our visit. He had not told me!*

### The preaching of the Gospel

*The sermon started out from Matthew 14 : 14 about Jesus, how, when he saw the multitude of people, he "was moved with compassion toward them and he healed their sick". The theme of Kagawa's sermon was: "Christ's compassion".*

*Toyohiko Kagawa immediately did something rather unusual. I am not sure that would be the proper thing to do in one of the well-bred congregations at home! He went up to a blackboard in*

the background, took a piece of chalk and wrote with light strokes in Japanese the first points of his sermon. Down in the chair rows many young people were equipped with paper and pencil.

At each new point in his sermon Kagawa went back to the blackboard from the pulpit. Sometimes he made a stylized drawing, for instance a double yoke illustrating that he who wants to serve finds it natural to lead more on his side than on his fellow-being's side. At times he was so deep in his train of ideas that for a while he would speak turned to the blackboard instead of toward us.

He spoke in short sentences, in his hoarse rather thin voice, about Christ's compassion. Christ gave himself completely. Christ identified himself with the suffering of mankind. Christ approached suffering people with the greatest humility. Christ's love was a love in practice. Christ's love did not shun unpleasant tasks. Christ's love never despaired of so-called hopeless cases. Christ's compassion embraced the individual.

Between the main points and the scribbling on the blackboard come the illustration from life. Following Christ in the discipleship of compassion often means the same as being misunderstood. "When I settled down in Kobe among the underprivileged, among the beggars, the thieves, the scum, many people shook their heads, you know. There has nearly grown a fashionable publicity around these years of slum life so it might well be that those who then thought I was foolish have now forgotten what they said. What they said was in fact: 'Now this fellow Kagawa, of course he is going to become a burglar himself!'"

"You have to experience deeply the worth of your own personality to be able to respect the personality of others". Kagawa walks from the pulpit closer to his audience. "We often say about others that they are hopeless cases, that it would be futile even to try. But then we have not deeply enough experienced our own worthlessness and our own worth. We have no right to despair of anyone. There are stone-deaf people who love music to such an extent that they have learned to receive sound vibrations by touching for instance a piano with their finger tips. That teaches us that we ought never to despair of the possibilities of salvation".

There is nothing conspicuous about Kagawa's external appearance. Yet, looking toward us with cataract-inflamed eyes, one of the greatest men of Japan is speaking. Christ's eternal compassion,



*which he is expounding, is engraved in Kagawa's face and, moreover, indelibly engraved in his contribution to the history of social progress in Japan. Sorrow has been etched in the lines around Kagawa's eyes but it is not the sorrow of self-pity but rather the expression of the experience of life's tragedy which some call "ignorance of the real laws" and other call "sin against the God of all life". Kagawa has identified himself with this tragedy, not only in passive meditation but in active contribution to the improvement of men's social lot. What he wanted to tell us today was that Christ saw, understood — and acted.*

### A singular contribution

*Kagawa is not the "only" great Christian leader in Japan. Many of his fellow-Christians among Westerners and Japanese sometimes speak with some irritation about "the unjustified Kagawa cult" and enlarge on "Kagawa's many deficiencies". I never argue with them. I am convinced that he has deficiencies. But, at the same time, I am convinced that Kagawa has contributed and is contributing more to the world's history of God-attachment to a much greater extent than those who are so irritated over his "popularity" and his deficiencies that they do not see his absolutely singular contribution.*

*If Toyohiko Kagawa is "popular" now, there have been times, on the other hand, when he was immensely despised. A person's singularity does not lie in how few his deficiencies are. It rather has to do with how alone he has been in and for things which meant more to him than "popularity".*

*Kagawa from his lone struggle has a message of a kind and an intensity greatly exceeding the more conventional spiritual development through which most of us have passed. You might call him a "spiritual eccentric" measuring him with our usual yard sticks. It is an "eccentricity" and "singularity" crystallized out of his identification with the under-dog. But the job itself usually is more terrifying than our courage and imagination are great.*

*However, when someone has had the courage to "stand alone", to "throw away his life" and this reaches our ears we receive comfort and inspiration. This is Toyohiko Kagawa's great contribution in the lives of many people.*

Bengt R. HOFFMAN.

## BOOK REVIEWS

TOWARDS A UNITED CHURCH 1913-1947. Various Authors. Edinburgh House Press, London. 10s. 6d.

THE REUNION OF THE CHURCH, by J. E. LESSLIE NEWBIGIN. S.C.M. Press, Ltd., London. 10s. 6d.

Both these books have been occasioned by the South India Scheme for Church Union, which, since they were written, has issued in the formation of the United Church of South India. Most readers of *The Student World* will be aware of the profound significance of this event as being the first occasion in which former episcopal and non-episcopal churches have been able to achieve full corporate union. Not all however will be acquainted even in outline with the story of the twenty-eight years of planning, discussion and controversy which preceded the act of inauguration of the United Church last September, or with the manner in which the long negotiations raised acute theological issues of decisive importance not only for South India but for the whole reunion movement. Some knowledge of these is essential for an understanding of the South Indian Church which is only now facing the test of life and whose future development for good or ill will have the most far-reaching repercussions throughout the churches. It is also essential for an appreciation of the still unsolved problem of Christian Unity which confronts the World Church not as an academic question, but as an urgent and radical challenge to its claim to have received the ministry of reconciliation and to be the witness to the Gospel of redemption declared in Jesus Christ. For both these reasons the books reviewed here are of first-class importance, and they can be recommended whole-heartedly to all who are willing to come to serious grips with the subject of Unity. Neither of them professes to be a

popular introduction to the subject and neither, in its entirety, is altogether easy reading. But it will be a very great pity if they are read only by professional students of contemporary church history and ecumenical theology. The quality of the writing is excellent, sometimes outstanding, and the combination of honesty and realism which the writers display, together with their willingness to face the deepest implications of their divergences as well as their agreements, should go far to prove to the doubting that Church Reunion is neither the dream of some vague enthusiasts to produce a superfluous uniformity throughout Christendom, nor the attempt of some men in a hurry to tamper with truth in the interests of a man-made kind of unity.

In *Towards a United Church* the presentation is mainly historical. The first two chapters tell the story of the attempt to form a Federation of Missionary Societies working in British East Africa arising from the Conference held at Kikuyu in 1913. In so far as it aimed ultimately at organic church union it failed. The reasons for the failure might have been discussed a little more fully in the second chapter. The main importance of "Kikuyu", however, was that it revealed once for all that, (to quote Lesslie Newbigin), "The connection between the movement for Christian reunion and the movement for world evangelization is of the deepest possible character. The two things are the two outward signs of a return to the heart of the Gospel itself". (*The Reunion of the Church*, p. 19); and secondly that it brought out in dramatic form the apparently insuperable disagreements that exist even among Christians who accept the obligation of unity, regarding the very nature of the Church itself. Until men's minds were focussed on these things no significant advance towards reunion could take place, and the World Church owes a great debt (often forgotten) to the pioneers and protagonists of Kikuyu for pointing the way.

The longest and most important essay in *Towards a United Church* is Stephen Neill's survey of the negotiations which went on from 1919 to 1947 for union in South India. It is difficult to praise this too highly; what might have been a dull and confusing account of committee resolutions, council deliberations and church controversies, each of them involving interminable complications and resulting in further definition and re-definition of terms

already agreed to, is in fact a lucid and lively presentation of the facts. The main lines are always clear, while the chief theological issues involved in the many controversies are stated with sympathetic understanding. On the other hand no attempt is made to display an unattainable objectivity; the writer deals frankly and critically with what he considers the mistakes made by all the parties at one time or another, and the lessons which he draws for the guidance of those concerned with future union negotiations are most valuable. The two remaining chapters contain statements from the Anglo-Catholic and Congregational points of view indicating the difficulties felt by these groups about the Union. As comments and, in places, correctives to Bishop Neill's account they enhance the value of the book, but they are too short in themselves to do full justice to the convictions which they represent. Canon Broomfield's essay will be specially useful to those who regard Anglo-Catholics as simply the obstructionists of the ecumenical movement.

Lesslie Newbigin's book is sub-titled *A Defence of the South India Scheme*. Less than half the book however is given over to a detailed examination of the Basis of Union of the new Church and most of the remainder consists of a first-rate theological enquiry into the nature of the Church's unity and continuity. The writer's conviction is that we shall not understand either the South Indian Church, or the problem of Christian disunity until we grasp that "A divided Church, in the New Testament sense of the word Church, is something illogical and incomprehensible — as illogical and incomprehensible as human sin" (p. 24). Two attempts are constantly being made to rationalize this irrationality, on the one hand the identification by many Catholics of one among the existing churches with the One Church of the New Testament and, on the other, the affirmation by many Protestants that the unity of the Church is a purely spiritual unity that visible organisational unity is not essential. Against both of these a true biblical view of the Church will maintain that corporeal and spiritual unity are indissolubly linked, and a realistic view of our present state will recognise that the fundamental problem of the Church's life is not its corporeality but the fact of sin within it. "The problem of the Church is the problem of sin in the Church. It can be stated in fact purely



in terms of the Church's 'spiritual' nature. The problem of the Church is that it is a communion of sinful souls with the Holy God. There is in the Church both union with Christ and also rebellion against Him — not that some are united and others rebellious, but that those who are truly 'in Christ' are yet at the same time rebels against Christ... The attempt to deny that the Church is really divided... rests upon a denial of this fundamental paradox of the Church's being, that it is both holy and sinful" (pp. 84-85). The explication of this position leads Newbigin to examine among other things the view that the Church can be described as the "Extension of the Incarnation". Here he subjects to detailed criticism the chapter on the Oneness of the Church in Father Congar's book *Chrétiens Désunis* (English title: *Divided Christendom*) and finds the description an obscuring of the truth. "The Church, like Jesus in His flesh, is visible. She is, and ought to be institutional. But unlike Jesus she is, and ought not to be, sinful. But because the Church is an institution historic continuity belongs to her proper nature as the visible expression of unity in love. But because she is sinful it is wrong to define the Church solely in terms of historic continuity apart from reference to that Gospel by faith in which the Church at all times lives. When once reference is made to that Gospel another principle of identification has been introduced..." (p. 64). This means that neither in the existence of the Church as a historically continuous body nor in the possession of an unbroken succession of a ministerial order can there be any guarantee of the Church's claim to be the true Church of God. The Church lives by faith, in daily response and self-offering to Him Who is its living and ever-present Lord. Its relationship with Him is dynamic and therefore its decisive marks are in the Word and Sacraments in which, as eschatological and social events, Christ is present with His people (pp. 101-102).

It is impossible by summary or quotation to do justice to the richness of these chapters and indeed of the whole book. The latter half takes us more fully into the questions of the Standard of Faith, Ministry and Sacraments, as they are dealt with in the Basis of Union of the South Indian Church. The writer points out explicitly that the official theology which he has expounded is not to be taken as the official theology of the new Church ; its

relevance, however, is obvious on every page whether one agrees with his conclusions on every point of the Scheme or not. In this connection it is essential to grasp the point which is made on page 121, that "The South India Scheme is full of illogicalities just because it takes account of the divisions in the Church and treats the act of union as one step only in the task of seeking the restoration of visible unity to the whole Church". Here, apart from everything else, is the claim which the United Church of South India makes on the prayers of all the churches and all Christian people. If it is not a very tidy structure its untidiness is a reflection of *our* disorder, and in launching out on its venture of faith, with all the tensions and difficulties that are inevitably involved in such a course, it is at least trying to do something for the rest of us which we have not yet had the courage to do for ourselves.

ERIC M. DUNCAN.

APOSTOLAT INTELLECTUEL EN CHINE — Quelques Suggestions pour l'Après-Guerre, by F. LEGRAND. Editions de l'AUCAM, 9, rue de Namur, Louvain. 1947.

There are several ways of redeeming the time in prison. Father Legrand took the opportunity of forced inactivity in a concentration camp in North China to survey the prospect and the resources for his mission — received from his Lord — that of the conversion of the Chinese people to Christianity.

The man has a clear mind as well as faith and hope.

"Even if we doubled the number of Christians it would be doubtful if the Christianization of China had made much progress. To convert China to Christianity means to impregnate Chinese society with the principles of the Gospel: to lead the whole social unit, the Chinese people, to understand the real meaning of life. It means to develop its culture and the whole civilisation of this great people that they may understand the meaning of their supernatural destiny".

Understanding the importance of the intelligentsia and of Chinese culture, he gives a good analysis of the changing Chinese situation and then proceeds to make constructive suggestions

about the various ways in which Chinese thought may be influenced through the press, literature, translations and the distribution of literature. He would organize a programme of publications to avoid overlapping and waste. Indeed, he is astonished to find that the (Protestant) Christian Literature Society has already translated Papini's *Life of Christ*. He is emphatic about the value of personal relationships with non-Christians, about the Christian "atmosphere" of schools and about the necessity of a high standard of general education for priests and evangelists.

The section of the book dealing with the training of missionaries is full of sound sense and the slow patience of those for whom their foreign assignment is a life work. "It must take some going to go to Tibet for life" said a Scottish engineer on a river steam boat to me one day in reference to one of our fellow travellers, a young German priest. When I met the same priest ten years later on his way to the NW boundary of China and found he had made himself an authority on Tibetan literature, I realised how far he had indeed gone. Men like this are prepared to pay the price. Father Legrand advocates uncompromisingly the absolute necessity of *three years language study* as preparation for the job — pointing out that no one who is incapable of reading the daily papers and current literature as well as the classics can hope to understand enough to reach the educated classes.

"For it cost more than that to redeem their souls" is the translation of Psalm 49 verse 8 in the Book of Common Prayer. More but not less...

WINIFRED GALBRAITH.

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